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SPEAIGHT,

DOROTHY, DAUGHTER OF LADY EADY.

157, NEW BOND STREET, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE WHEAT OUTLOOK.

AT this period of the year we are able to form a fair idea of the world's probable wheat output in the autumn, since the various Governments have now got into the habit of publishing the estimates of the crops. The French Ministry of Agriculture estimates that the wheat crop is "good," in regard to about half of it, while the other half is "fairly good," and the land under wheat cultivation is very much the same as it was last year. Barley is a good crop throughout. In Germany the Government officials consider that the crops are better than the average of the last twelve years. The best crops are winter wheat, spring wheat, spring barley, oats, and potatoes. In Hungary it is estimated that the yield will be 156,000,000 bushels, as compared with 157,000,000 bushels last year. Spain reports a considerable deficiency, and probably will have to import wheat during the coming season. In Russia winter wheat is near the average and spring wheat is satisfactory. But the important factor this year is likely to be the United States yield, as there has been an increase in the area under wheat amounting to over 3,000,000 acres. The crop, however, has not received so favourable a report as that last year. In Argentine the year's crop is about 2,500,000 tons over the total of last year. The Indian outlook

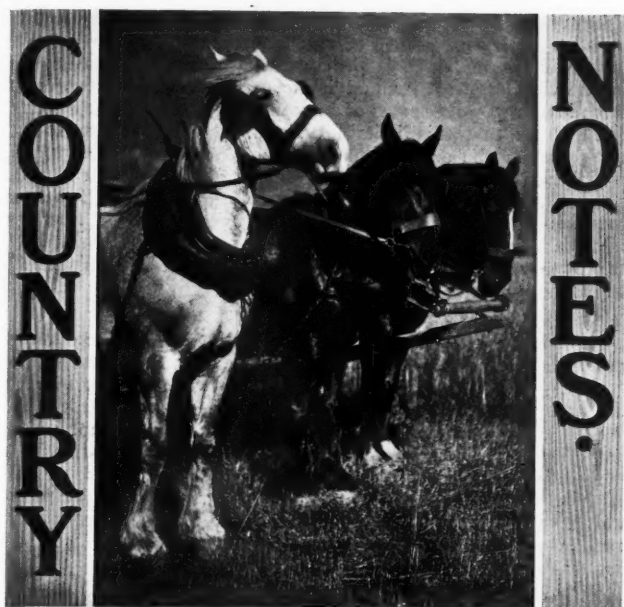
we dealt with in a previous issue. Considering how favourable these reports are, on the whole, it seems likely that during the course of the autumn there may be a slight fall in the price of wheat. Much, however, will depend on the way in which the crop in the United States is realised.

It is quite unnecessary here to lay emphasis on the importance of these reports, since, to a large extent, the welfare of the agricultural interests in England depends upon them. Moreover, it would be idle to blink the fact that there are political issues which are likely to be illogically determined by the price of wheat at the time they come before the public. It is very obvious that proposals by such a large body as the English electorate must depend to a great extent on the circumstances under which they are submitted to public discussion. At a time when wheat was scarce, and the price high, people would be ill-disposed to pay more than they could help, while naturally, if wheat were low and the loaf cheap, the same scruples would not come into existence. Still, the practical question is, how far is the wheat supply of the coming season likely to influence the prices obtained by English farmers? From our own reports it is evident that the harvest, though it may reach something approaching to an average if the weather conditions continue to be favourable, can under no conceivable circumstances turn out to be a first-rate crop. On the contrary, it was damaged to a considerable extent by the frost and drought of the early spring, and the rain, as far as most of the districts were concerned, came too late to be of much service. There is likely to be, therefore, rather a shortage of grain, and certainly a shortage of straw. We notice that the Government, in making certain calculations, has put the price of straw at 40s. a ton, and this probably will be accepted as fair value by the farmer, who can obtain more value from straw than was the case with his predecessors. In fact, when chaffed and with other ingredients made into a fodder, its value begins to approach that of hay. Unfortunately, the straw crop is bound to be a short one, and what will be felt too is that the hay crop is itself considerably below the average. No doubt many farmers possess stacks left over from the splendid crop they had last year, but a supply of this kind soon gets exhausted, and it is to be feared that fodder will be somewhat dear in the coming winter. Nor is it possible to hold out much hope that the price of wheat will be enhanced. It shows no likelihood of coming down to any appreciable extent, because in no country in the world is there really a bumper supply, and several of our usual sources will actually export less than they usually do. On the other hand, so very good an average is promised throughout the world that it would be hopeless to expect that prices will improve at all. They are, as far as we can judge, likely to remain during next year very low indeed.

It will be remembered that some years ago an American professor of economics startled the world by a prophecy that a time would arrive within the experience of men then living when wheat would be so scarce a commodity that chemists would have to be relied upon to produce another kind of food. We do not think that the incredulity with which this statement was received would exist now, because, year by year, we find exemplified the truth of the old doctrine of the political economists that population ever tends to creep up to and get beyond its food supply. Wherever wheat is being exported in large quantities the population is rapidly growing, and in some places, such as the United States, the end of the exportation is looming into view. The cheapness of food during the last five-and-twenty years has been nothing more nor less than one of the accidents to which the world is subject. It arose from the discovery at one and the same time of vastly cheapened means of transit, and of regions of a verdant soil that could be made to bear fruit. How long it would take to exhaust the supply it would be difficult to estimate. American economists who have given a great deal of thought to the question consider that in another twenty-five years there will be a scarcity of food and a return to that dearth which made life so hard for the poor during the greater part of the eighteenth century. On the ground that there is very little use in attempting to cross a bridge before you come to it, it may be as well to avoid speculation. When the population becomes too large for its wheat supply, no doubt chemistry will be able to replace the loss with some concentrated food, for science has opened up boundless possibilities on every side. This may read like an "anticipation" by Mr. H. G. Wells, but those who have studied the question carefully are convinced that the era of cheap food is not likely to be of long duration. The staff of life possesses the magical property of being able to call into being more people than it can support.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Dorothy, daughter of the Hon. Sir Charles Swinfen and Lady Eady of Gloucester Square, Hyde Park, and Outlands Lodge, Weybridge.



THE political aspect of redistribution is one with which we feel no inclination to deal here; but the withdrawal of Mr. Balfour's resolutions ought to have an indirect effect on country life. It will, at any rate, admit of the House rising much sooner than would have been possible if this controversial subject had been pursued to the end, and a large percentage at least of the members will be glad to know that they will have every opportunity of beginning shooting operations on the Twelfth. The announcement will be all the more welcome this year, because the exceptional heat has made town life nearly unbearable, and we are glad to know that the reports from the various grouse moors are to the effect that the prospects are more flourishing than they have been for many seasons past. The birds are numerous; they have hatched out well; there has been no calamity in the shape of bad weather, and, as far as we have heard, no sign of disease yet.

In the Japanese war with Russia everything has gone on very slowly, and this remark apparently applies also to the peace negotiations. By the appointment of M. Witte it would appear that the Czar is at last inclined to make terms with his adversaries, as this Minister is known to be favourably disposed to the termination of the war. We have to remember, however, that hostilities are being conducted as keenly as ever. General Linievitch has still a huge army, estimated at something like 400,000, in Manchuria, and he and the generals with him profess to be confident of giving a good account of themselves. It makes little difference that outsiders do not regard it as at all likely, or even possible, for Russia now to win any victory either on sea or land. The nation has in no way shown its folly more than in its reluctance to accept defeat. President Roosevelt would add greatly to the benefits that he has already conferred on the civilised world if he would endeavour to hurry on the peace negotiations.

The committee appointed to enquire into the state of the London streets, although not agreed in the recommendations made, have issued a very suggestive report. The main idea is that a London Traffic Board should be established for the purpose of dealing with similar questions when they arise in future. Few will think that a board of control is not required. Annually the difficulty of getting about in the streets of London increases. It is a commonplace to say that the only certain method of progress at present is on foot, because, if one gets into any kind of vehicle whatever, it stands a chance of being blocked at a street corner till the train or other engagement is missed. The heroic remedy that the County Council appeared inclined to carry out at one time was that of widening the streets by removing buildings, but this is not a profitable undertaking, since the owners of the sites naturally demand full compensation, and experience has shown that the buildings in new streets do not let with the facility that was prophesied for them.

Practically speaking, the main suggestion outside of the Traffic Board is that the tramlines should be increased, and at the same time joined together, so as to form one complete system. In other words, it is recognised that workers of all kinds who are obliged to be in the City should be provided with every possible facility for getting into the outskirts or even amid rural surroundings when their work is done. This, indeed, would conduce very much to the health of the community, although

one does not quite see how it would sensibly relieve the traffic, for the blocks that occur in the main streets are usually due to drays and other heavy traffic obstructing the lighter carriages. Could it not be made compulsory for the slow and weighty carts to go along the quieter streets, while the great avenues, like the Strand, Fleet Street, or Oxford Street, should be reserved for passenger traffic. The other idea of building more electric railways will, of course, be a help, although it is curious to note that, however full the Tube may be, it never seems to make any difference to the traffic in Oxford Street.

The statement that a syndicate of Germans has purchased one of the most extensive coalfields in Wales has been received with a considerable amount of apprehension by English-speaking people. The coal in question is largely the best steam coal procurable. The estate extends to some 6,500 acres, and it was computed during one of the scares about our diminishing coal supply that there was fuel enough in that particular estate alone to keep the British Navy going for 170 years at its present rate of consumption. Whether it be wise and prudent to allow a foreign nation to exploit this splendid natural store of coal is a question that will probably be determined by Parliament. We do not believe that prominent politicians, either on the Opposition or the Government side of the House, will allow this transaction to be completed without raising the question, and taking the mind of the people upon it.

TO PERDITA.

Dear, when green apple-boughs toss in the wind,
Under dark summer skies starless and blind,
Wet with the summer rain,
Do old dreams rise again,
Or are they all forgot, time out of mind?
Dear, when the red rose petals lie on the grass,
Dim in the light of the dawn as I pass,
Mirrored in memories
Others as fair as these
Bloom like the face of a rose in the glass.
Flower of the shadows none other may find,
Borne like the breath of a rose on the wind,
Now when the night winds raise
Ghosts of dead summer days,
Swathes of a harvest men reap not nor bind.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON.

In one of the fits of righteousness to which journalists are subject, a newspaper has recently been publishing examples of the wickedness of London tradesmen. It is alleged that the shopkeepers of nearly every kind are in the habit of selling goods that are not what they pretend to be. That the fisherman gives you one kind of fish when you ask for another, imposes Norwegian salmon upon you as prime Scotch, and otherwise does his best to cheat. No doubt some of these practices are more or less common, and every attempt to get at and purify commerce is to be welcomed. At the same time, it would be idle to lose sight of the fact that a vast improvement has taken place during the last generation or two. The Londoner of to-day has certainly opportunities of getting pure and wholesome food that were not enjoyed by his forefathers, and this is particularly true of farm produce. Old men can still remember the time when the butter that was sent into London was astonishingly bad in quality and sent also in a very filthy state; not only so, but it frequently happened that the supplies stopped on account of bad weather. If the butter of to-day could be contrasted with that which came in fifty or sixty years ago, some idea would be obtained of the change effected, and this applies more or less to all our food supplies, fruit, meat, eggs, and fish.

An extremely interesting report has appeared in the *Standard* on the progress of the movement made for establishing school gardens. The person who is entitled to most credit in this matter is one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Mr. Rooper, who at one time undertook to demonstrate the practicability of carrying on gardens in connection with schools at his own expense, and for that purpose acquired some land on Boscombe Cliff. Very poor land it was, for Mr. Rooper held the sound idea that if the boys were to be taught gardening practically, it would be better to set them to work on unfertile soil, after which the management of the village garden would be an easy matter for them. The experiment was so successful that the idea was adopted by the Board of Education, and cottage gardening was placed on the code. In 1903 a grant was claimed on behalf of 5,486 scholars coming from 481 boys' schools and a few girls. The figures for last year have not yet been published, but there is reason to believe that the increase is going on.

In connection with this, it is interesting to know that the London County Council has two school gardens under its control

—one at Bostall Lane, Woolwich, and the other at Bailey's Lane, Stamford Hill. The report to which we have referred tells us that the scholars have transformed the waste land in front of the school into a beautiful flower garden, while at the back there is a garden proper, in which vegetables and other products for the cottage are cultivated. Inside the school is a Nature study museum and an aquarium, where the children have an opportunity of studying the form and characters of different fish. One consequence of the establishment of these gardens is that the boys stay longer at school. They find the work most fascinating, and many of them, instead of seeking situations in town, try to get places as assistants to market gardeners.

Recently much apprehension has been expressed in different quarters as to the growing scarcity of some of our bird visitors. It is therefore pleasing to learn that at the last meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, a member was able to announce the occurrence of a pair of waxwings (*Ampelis garrulus*) near Maidenhead in Berkshire, on April 11th; and, though he was unable to give their subsequent history, the fact is interesting, as these birds are as a rule only expected here after very severe continental winters. At the same meeting another member was able to exhibit an egg of the marsh-warbler (*Acrocephalus palustris*) which he had taken in East Kent on June 23rd. The nest contained five partly incubated eggs, the remaining four of which were hatched. This is believed to be the first recorded instance of the breeding of this bird in Kent.

The eggs of the knot (*Tringa canutus*) are among the prizes which most oologists covet. Dr. Bianchi of the St. Petersburg Museum, who has been spending a short holiday in London recently, brought with him, to delight the eyes of enthusiastic collectors, no less than twelve eggs and nestlings, procured on the Taimyr Peninsula and the New Siberian Islands. To make identification certain the old birds were in every instance taken with their offspring. These trophies formed part of the collection made during the expedition of the late Dr. Walters of St. Petersburg. Though the nestlings have long been known through the specimens taken by Colonel Fielden during the Arctic Expedition of 1876, nothing was known of the eggs till Dr. Walters discovered them in 1901. These prove to be very variable in form, colour, and size, but are typical plover's eggs. The nest is placed in grassy places in the Tundra, and consists of a shallow depression lined with a few dry bents and a white tangle.

It is satisfactory to learn that steps are being taken by the French Government to protect the elephant in the territories of the French Congo. The necessity of some restriction on the wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter of these animals has become as evident to the merchant as to the sportsman and naturalist. In 1889 the average weight of tusks taken in the Congo region was about 25lb., while in 1896 it had shrunk to 12lb.; and it has been obvious that even from a merely commercial standpoint to allow the existing state of affairs to continue longer would be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Henceforth tusks of under 4lb. weight are neither to be sold nor exported, while ivory will not be accepted from natives in payment of taxes. The natives, however, are not nearly so instrumental in the indiscriminate destruction of elephants of all ages and either sex as the white hunters, and the new laws will have to be vigilantly administered, and probably by force, if the preservation of the elephant in the Congo territories is to become effective.

We have been rather disposed to regard the applications of the Marquess of Queensberry to the magistrate to know whether he might shoot motorists "on sight," and of the motorist who wished to know whether he might shoot the Marquess of Queensberry, as intended rather for our humorous entertainment than for serious consideration; but, if the report be true that comes from America, in parts of that country of drastic legal methods the shooting at motors which are exceeding the legal maximum of speed, and whose drivers refuse to stop when ordered to do so by the police, is enjoined by law on these officials, with the object of puncturing the tyres and so bringing the offending car to a standstill. Perhaps the story is one that requires fuller confirmation than the cable account carries with it, but it gives the circumstantial detail that a motorist has been wounded in the thigh by the misdirected aim of a policeman acting on these instructions in Rye, a suburb of New York.

Every year, as the heat wave, which is of almost annual occurrence, arrives, statistics more and more firmly establish the view that suicides and homicidal crimes increase in direct ratio with the rise of temperature. One is reminded of the story of the old Spanish law which made "killing no murder," or, at least, mitigated the penalties considerably, while the sirocco blew, but which had to be repealed because it was found that the prudent man who had any vendetta business on hand would

always save it up until the sirocco came, so as to pay the lighter penalty. All of us, probably, without feeling any serious temptation to suicide or homicide, are aware of an increase of irritability in the very hot weather, and it is very well worth noting that there is a strong consensus of opinion on the part of the Faculty of Medicine that this irritability, and the general discomforts attendant on the extreme heat, are much reduced by a greater moderation in the consumption of alcohol and of butcher's meat. After all, the scientific view is virtually identical with that of common-sense—that in the hot weather we should avoid things that are heating. But amongst things that are really "heating" are to be reckoned a good many kinds of what are commonly known as "cooling" drinks.

After the severe scare not unnaturally caused by the many cases of typhoid fever, which it was impossible not to ascribe to infected oysters, some two years ago, it is very satisfactory to have the assurance given by the chairman of the famous Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company that during the past season not a case had been reported of ill effect from oyster eating. The statement was made at the annual meeting of the company, which continues in a very prosperous condition, paying an 8 per cent. dividend, and having laid down about 1,500,000 oysters in excess of the number—some 8,700,000—sold during the year. The fact that out of this immense number consumed not a single instance of ill effects was reported, ought sufficiently to reassure the public mind if any anxiety remains; and for this admirable record the chairman ascribed much credit to the efforts of the Fishmongers' Company to prevent any oysters from polluted beds coming to the market.

PEGGY'S PRAYERS.

Up along to Pixy Church, up the mossy stairs,
Kneelin' in the raxens green, Peggy saith her prayers,
Heareth river, O my dear! laughen' now and then;
Surely 'tes the pixy-ringers passen' thro' the ven!
Vive bells begin to peal up the Steeple Tor,
Ringin' Grandsire Doubles, merry on the moor!

Up along to Pixy Church, up the granite stairs,
Peggy in her Sunday frock stays to say her prayers;
Harky then to flopadocks trollen' in the heat!
Whortle, yether, all together, chimen' loud and sweet!
Seven bells a-clashen' under Steeple Tor,
Ringin' Grandsire Triples, merry auver moor!

Up along to Pixy Church, up the grey auld stairs,
Kneelin' in the brackens green, Peggy ends her prayers;
Heareth river, O my dear! laughen' by again!
Heaven's aun singers be callen' she, carollen' thro' the rain!
Nine bells with muffled peals up the Steeple Tor,
Ring a maiden's soul home down the dimsy moor.

ALICE E. GILLINGTON.

The vagaries of chess-players are difficult to understand. One would naturally think that to hold a congress in the hottest months of the year would be more of a pain than a pleasure; yet this is the custom of the game. Nearly every year a great tournament is got up at one of the fashionable watering-places, and the various champions encounter each other over the board with the temperature at about 80 in the shade. In the one that has been going on just now, English players have not greatly distinguished themselves, the battle really lying among the Germans—Messrs. Maroczy and Schlechter, and Dr. Tarrasch. The last-mentioned was watched with peculiar interest, inasmuch as some time during the autumn it is expected that he will play for the Championship of the World. Probably his purpose in entering the tournament was less with the idea of winning a prize than of getting himself into good form for the impending event. In any case, he played much better at the end of the tournament than at the beginning, and probably had to be content with third place purely through excess of caution; so that his play tells us little of his chances against Dr. Lasker or Mr. Marshall.

The offer made by the Society for the Prevention of Steel Traps of a prize of £50 to the inventor of the most humane trap for catching rabbits has, we understand, met with a lively response. The secretary, Mr. Sidney Trist, has asked us to make two enquiries of the landed gentry and the farmers. The first is: Should a humane trap capture the animal unharmed, or should it kill it instantaneously? And the second: Will any landowners, with practical knowledge of the question, kindly consent to serve as a committee to examine the models sent in? The latter suggestion is an extremely good one, but if the society really wants to effect a reform in the method of catching rabbits, it ought to have on its committee several rabbit-catchers and gamekeepers. They have the most practical knowledge of the requirements, and it is very certain that the most ingenious instrument will not be used unless they find that it serves their purpose as effectually as the steel trap does.

The attempt that is to be made to revive the old Olympic games in Greece is one that will meet with much sympathy in this country. If effective management by leading men can assure its success, then that success is assured already. The Crown Prince of Greece is president of the Athens Central Committee. For Great Britain, the Duke of Argyll is president of the national committee, with the Dukes of Westminster and Marlborough, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Jersey, Lord Alverstone, and the Prime Minister as vice-presidents. The athletic meeting will be held every four years, and the considerable interval should tend to give added importance to the races. The programme for the first meeting, next year, open to amateurs only, contains a curious mixture of old and new. There will be racing and jumping of all kinds, including hurdle-racing and pole jumping; and there are disc throwing, wrestling and gymnastics, lawn tennis, cricket (if practicable), shooting, fencing, and (if practicable) boat-racing. Doubtless there are many of the elements conducive to success present in these suggestions and arrangements; but the essential element of all is that the meeting should arouse the interest of the people of Greece and of the athletes of the world. Failing this, it will lack the importance which should attach to

the revival, even in name, of an institution which had so potent an influence in olden times. The result of the experiment will be watched with much interest.

The invitation issued to photographers by the Essex Field Club to assist in forming a photographic survey of the county will result, it is to be hoped, in the acquisition of a series of local pictures of real interest and value. Though much has passed away within the last dozen or twenty years, it would still be possible in well-nigh every country district to secure an accurate pictorial record of cottage and farmhouse architecture, rural arts and crafts, and local peculiarities of costume which will assuredly be of the very greatest interest in a few years' time, when many of them bid fair to have disappeared altogether. It is the very universality of such features of rural life which make them so interesting to the generations after they have passed away, though at the time they may seem so familiar as to be scarcely worth recording. In spite of the disappearance of so many distinctive local customs, every part of the country has still features of its own which are well worth recording in this way, and the enterprise of the Essex Field Club deserves to find many imitators.

THE HOME LIFE OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS. THE SONG-SPARROW.

EARLY in the spring, as early, sometimes, as March 1st, or even the latter part of February, those lovers of the open air who are brave enough to tramp abroad through the country fields and lanes, ignoring the discomforts of mud and half-melted snow, will almost surely be rewarded by hearing the first bird-note of the year, the strain of the song-sparrow. True, his voice now has not the sweetness or liquid quality that it acquires later in the season, but, nevertheless, the song is indicative of the spirit of the bird, cheerful and seemingly contented under the most trying circumstances. The song-sparrow is a bird common throughout the length and breadth of the United States, and even extends its range considerably beyond the boundaries of that country. Although, owing to climatic changes, in different parts of North America, it has a variety of forms (no less than twenty-one), known scientifically as sub-species, still, to all intents and purposes, it is the same bird from Maine to California. In the North-eastern States it is one of our commonest songsters, and although the majority of them migrate to a more Southern clime in the fall, a number remain with us all the winter; but these are, in all probability, the ones that have



THE NEST



A YOUNG SONG-SPARROW.

summered further North. At this time of the year, however, our little sparrow is almost entirely silent, seldom ever giving utterance to a chirp, and keeping close to covert, where he can be somewhat protected from the cold winds. We are conscious of his presence only by catching fleeting glimpses of him as he glides from thicket to thicket, or dodges in and out of some brush pile, in colour so closely matching the tone of the brush itself as to make him difficult of detection. He is a seed eater, and can always manage, even when the snow is the deepest, to find enough seeds clinging to the dead stalks to keep him in food, so that there is little or no danger of his starving; and although he is more of a summer than a winter bird, he is a hardy little fellow, and his soft, thick feathers seem to be an ample protection against even the extremes of cold. The colour of his back, wings, and tail is chestnut, streaked in places with grey and black; his under-parts are white, with splashes of brown on his throat and chest. Both male and female birds are marked alike, although



"HURRY UP!"

the markings on the male are a trifle stronger and the general tone of colour brighter. His total length from tip of bill to tip of tail is about 6½ in.

Towards the end of February those individuals of this species that have spent the winter in the South begin to return and join the ranks of those who remained behind. Then does their time of singing commence, to be continued with hardly a cessation—except for a few weeks in August—until nearly the middle of November, for theirs, of all the bird-songs, is the first to be heard in the spring and the last in the fall. The song itself is characteristic, and once heard can never be forgotten, although short and of little variation. The first three or four notes are uttered in a low key, but with increasing emphasis; then with a sudden leap the singer ascends to the key note, sustains it for a couple of counts, drops to a slightly lower key, and suddenly stops, leaving in the mind of the listener the impression that he has failed to complete his performance. The best translation of the song into words is given by one author as "Press-press-PRESS, BY-TRRRRR-RIAN-ian." April is for them the month of love-making, and by May 1st at the latest the birds are mated and must take up the serious cares of life. As a matter of fact, however, the seriousness of life never seems to strike them, and the cares sit but lightly on their shoulders. Especially is this true of the male, for during the entire period of

their home life he can always find the time to leave his duties at very frequent intervals, to flit to the topmost branch of some low bush, and there pour forth his dainty little song as though from the absolute joy of living.

The home, a rather compact structure of dead leaves, grasses, strips of grape-vine bark, pieces of dead weed stalks and twigs, rootlets, and in fact almost any like material, and lined with fine dead grasses and horse-hairs, is usually placed on the ground, hidden in a tussock of grass, under a brush pile, in a fence corner, under the edge of an overhanging bush, or in any such a situation that will afford it the proper concealment. Sometimes, but not so frequently, it is built in a low cedar or other evergreen bush, and I have even found a nest placed in the side of a haystack. Two, and sometimes even three, broods are raised in a season, and it is not at all unusual to find occupied nests as late as September. In size the nest averages 4½ in. outside and 2½ in. inside diameter. The building of the

home seldom occupies more than three or four days, and by the middle of the month the first clutch, containing either four or five eggs, and occasionally even six, is laid. The eggs of this species probably show a greater variation in markings,



THE SONG-SPARROW FAMILY.

size, and colouring than do those of any other of our birds. The ground colour ranges through all the shades from greyish white to turquoise blue. The modulations are of all the various tones of brown, with a substratum of spots and splashes of lilac or mauve. The markings differ remarkably in size, shape, and general distribution, some eggs being so covered with minute spots as to give almost the effect of a solid colour, while others are very sparsely and heavily blotched, and I have, occasionally, found them almost immaculate. Some eggs are marked evenly over the entire surface, while in others the markings are all gathered to form a wreath about the larger end. These differences hold good not only in eggs laid by different birds, but frequently also in those laid by one bird in the same laying. As an instance of this, in a second clutch of three eggs collected in July, 1898, one egg was heavily splashed with colour over the entire surface; another was evenly marked with very fine fleckings, these confluent, at the larger end, into a distinct wreath, while the third was almost entirely immaculate. Eggs of this species average in length 77-100 in., and in breadth 60-100 in.



A STRUGGLE FOR THE TIT-BIT.

For a period of about fifteen days the devoted little mother most closely sits upon these, her treasures, while her mate provides her from hour to hour with food, and enlivens the tedium of her duties by singing to her from some near-by perch. While incubating the female sits very close, often not rising until the very clump of weeds that conceals her nest is violently agitated. I have, time and again, stepped within a few inches

June or early July, and then, sometimes, a third is reared. The last brood reared have the advantage over their predecessors of remaining longer with their parents, and thus receiving more of their wise example and counsel before being sent into the world to shift for themselves; so in the autumn the song-sparrows are to be seen eddying about stone walls, roadside thickets, and old pastures in little companies of six or seven, no doubt consisting of the parents with their last brood, which remain together in happy idleness and move southward at their leisure. L. W. BROWNELL.



CALLING FOR THEIR DINNER.

of a sitting bird, she remaining motionless until after I had passed. The male, however, is much more easily disturbed, and at the first appearance of an intruder upon what he considers as his exclusive domain, his song is changed, sometimes even in the middle of a note, to a doleful, distressed chirp, which he keeps up without intermission until the interloper departs. He is extremely discreet, however, and will not approach the near vicinity of the nest so long as he has reason to believe he is being watched. This is, evidently, with the intention of misleading the inquisitive and objectionable trespasser. When finally the young are hatched the real work of the parents begins, for, with five gaping mouths and hungry maws to fill, the old birds have but little leisure. With it all, however, the male still manages to find time for an occasional minute of vocal exercise.

At first, as is the case with most young birds, their food consists entirely of insects, which must be beaten to a pulp by the parent's bill ere they are allowed to enter the waiting mouth. I think it would be impossible for anyone to fully realise the number of injurious caterpillars, beetles, grasshoppers, etc., that a pair of these useful little birds destroy until he has watched a pair of them feeding their young. I once spent something more than two hours watching such a dinner-party in the middle of the day, when the business of feeding is not carried on with such activity as in the early morning. During this period one or the other of the old birds brought food to the young ones on an average once every two minutes, and the astonishing part of it to me was where the parents succeeded in finding so many insects, and where the young succeeded in storing them away.

When about twelve or thirteen days old the young birds leave the nest, and are then cared for entirely by the father, while the mother immediately sets about the construction of a second nest to receive another brood. Although the first nest is usually still in good condition, it is seldom or never used a second time; but the new nest is placed in close proximity to it, and often raised somewhat above the ground in a low bush or shrub. By the time this is completed, and the eggs laid, the father has abandoned the first brood, who must care for themselves in the future, and is ready to again play the part of the dutiful husband. This second brood is brought out in the latter part of

A BERKSHIRE VILLAGE.

TRAVELLERS on the Great Western main line who deign to lift their eyes from paper or book, may have noticed that a few miles west of Didcot Junction, with which many are, doubtless, only too familiar, the train quits the bare down country it has traversed since leaving the valley of the Thames under Streatley Hill, and plunges into a leafy wilderness of orchards, meadows, and spinneys. Here and there one catches glimpses of thatched roofs and snug homesteads that nestle among the greenery, and serve to confirm the otherwise doubtful inference to be drawn from the presence of the wayside station through which the express has just thundered. The village of Steventon thus indicated, which is sometimes mistaken for Jane Austen's native place in the adjoining county of Hampshire, lies at the foot of the last billowy ridge thrown out by the range of chalk hills that form the backbone of Berkshire, and that lend its scenery the peculiar charm, the touch of wildness and solitude, which distinguishes it from the other home counties.

Beyond the green slope falling steeply to the railway the unsheltered fields, which are threaded at wide intervals by rows of lopped elms bent eastward by the prevailing wind, run up in gentle undulations to the downs. North of the village they spread flat and open towards the distant wooded river valley, forming a kind of moorland that during the winter months hides its chill, sodden dreariness behind a veil of grey mist. In spring and summer time the broad level sweep, that matches the wide sweep of sky above, quickens into a mosaic of colour upon which



A DINNER FOR TWO.

the lights and shadows play. From whichever end Steventon be approached, its aspect, hidden away as it is among the leafy thicket that breaks the bareness of the plain, causes the stranger a thrill of pleasurable surprise. Nor does closer acquaintance tend to diminish the feeling. The village has long been a favourite subject for pencil and brush, and though, from a literary point of view, it suffers by comparison with its Hampshire name-

sake, it has of recent years been associated with the genius of the Belgian dramatist and prose poet whose works, thanks to Mr. Sutro's able translations, may now be read in every English household.

The history of Steventon is meagre. Like the majority of the adjacent townships, it was the seat of a monastic establishment, Henry I. having granted the manor to the Abbey of Bec. Founded by Harlewin, or Herlouin, a knight of Brionne, this famous school diffused the love of letters not only throughout the Norman Duchy, but over the whole of France. It numbered among its sons the great Lanfranc and his greater pupil Anselm, statesman, scholar, and saint, who united with a passionate zeal for knowledge a tenderness that would be rare even in these milder days, and a courage that enabled him to withstand the monarch who had thrust upon him the primacy of England.

It may well have been the wish to please his trusted counsellor that led Henry, after his accession, to bestow upon Anselm's beloved abbey the manor of Steventon, through which place the Conqueror's youngest son must often have ridden as a lad when hawking or hunting. Here, in the lonely Berkshire hamlet, the alien monks founded a "cell"—a dependent religious house—whither, tradition says, refractory brethren were sent from the mother cloister by way of punishment. One can imagine how the hearts of the poor exiles, set down among a rude people and under a foreign sky, must have yearned for their stately home across the sea, for the sunny clime of Normandy, her green hills and smiling valleys.

When Edward III. began the work which his warlike successor, Henry V., completed, of suppressing the alien monasteries and disposing of their lands in order to raise funds wherewith to prosecute the war against France, the manor of Steventon and The Priory, which included the inappropriate rectory and the advowson of the vicarage, were purchased by Sir Hugh Calverly. They passed later to the Abbey of Westminster, and are now the property of the Dean and Chapter. Few traces of monastic buildings remain to-day, though the memory of their former presence is handed down by the name The Priory, which is borne by a pretty gabled house at the western extremity of the village, not far from the church. It is probable that this house stands on the site of the monastery. It is certain that it replaced an older building, of which one gable has hitherto escaped destruction, and with its diamond-paned bow window and oak woodwork survives as a picturesque fragment of ancient domestic architecture.

Until comparatively recent years there existed opposite The Priory what was known as "the dungeon." It was described to the writer as being "of wood" and "underground," and is said to have been connected with the monastery by a subterranean passage. The entrance to the latter may still be seen, though the passage itself is blocked. The dungeon, where, according to popular report, the more refractory of the refractory monks were confined until they learnt the wisdom of submission, was destroyed more than fifty years ago. A labourer, who claims to have seen it in his boyhood, declares that it was then used as a storehouse for corn. His statement, however, is received with reserve, for, as a resident pointed out, a subterranean chamber would be a singularly undesirable place in which to preserve grain.

Steventon was the home of two ancient and honourable families. The Smallbones recorded their pedigree as early as 1664; they are now represented by a "small publican," who lets out a horse and trap on hire. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* The Wisemans, who were among the most important gentry of the neighbourhood, possessed considerable wealth, and held a manor in West Hendred, a parish under the downs, where they built a lordly mansion with wings, a centre block having two porches, north and south, and a chapel for their private devotions. The Berkshire branch of the Wisemans has become extinct. The mansion was pulled down in 1722 to make way for a plain farmhouse, and of the chapel, which sixty years later was being used as a pigeon-cote, not a vestige remains. The county has continued to make good Fuller's criticism that "the lands of Berkshire are skittish and apt to cast their owners," and in few instances has his wish been fulfilled, that "the Berkshire gentry may be better settled in their saddles, so that the sweet places in this county may not be subject to so many mutations."

Steventon boasts no mansions, lordly or otherwise, though it contains many wonderfully picturesque cottages, and several ancient houses, one of which is of about the same date as the old portion of The Priory, and is far more ornate. Its curious high-pitched roof and fine barge-board, its projecting windows, and the parqueting and carved timber-work that adorn its walls, offer a refreshing contrast to the crude "residences" which are springing up in too many rural resorts. The beauty of mellow red-tiled roof or homely thatch, of moss-grown barn and clustering ricks, is heightened by the background of orchards and meadows, which, even in the hottest summer weather, are perennially fresh and cool and green, owing to the several streams that intersect the village. At one shady corner the remains of the parish stocks recall the past and its rough justice, while the obtrusive fire-engine house near the green is evidence, in more

ways than one, that the railroad has brought Steventon abreast of the times. The green itself, when yet a green, was all that it ought to be, save that it lacked a duck-pond to match the stocks. Bare and open and wind-swept, it was altogether charming, Dame Nature—clever gardener!—being mainly responsible for its tendance. Then as now, pretty houses and gardens stood round about it, and a wayside inn, before which Scotch firs stood like sentinels, tall and still, lent it distinction. At the time of the late Queen's first Jubilee the green was elevated to the dignity of a "recreation ground," losing not a little of its rustic character in the process. Clumps of shrubs were planted, swings and a cricket pavilion erected, and the whole is kept neat and tidy, to the profit of the villagers and the loss of the casual tourist. The glory of Steventon, that feature which marks it out from its neighbours, is its boulevard causeway—the sole specimen of the kind in England, except that at Harrold, Bedfordshire. It starts near The Priory, and runs the whole length of the village from west to east. The paved walk is raised high above the road, and is bordered on either side with elms of all sizes and ages, the largest and most ancient being those that line the eastern section. The only known record extant concerning it is a board in the church, which states that there formerly existed a stone tablet whereon was inscribed a statement to the effect that "two ladies of ancient repute" had bequeathed certain lands for the maintenance of the causeway, the rent of which is still applied to this purpose. Various tales are current as to its origin. One version affirms that it was built by some Huguenot refugees in token of their gratitude at having escaped from the massacre of St. Bartholomew. According to another story, it was constructed as a penance by the refractory monks. If this be the case, the prior who inaugurated the work was not only a sound economist to whom unprofitable labour was abhorrent, but a man possessed of shrewd common-sense. Mention has already been made of the brooks that meander through the village. Even in these days of scientific draining and sanitary exactions, the roadway of Town Street during a rainy season is by no means all that a fastidious walker could desire. When the black brothers were lords of the manor, it was probably often under water. Scarce three miles away across the fields lay Abingdon, a not unimportant town that had grown up around the great monastery where one of the two mitred abbots Berkshire owned held sway, and where Prince Henry, whose father had placed him there as a scholar, had applied himself with such zeal to his tasks that he earned the title of *Beauclerc*.

ELEANOR G. HAYDEN.

THE BULL.

I KNOW a bank whereon the wild thyme and agrimony grow; but that is in midsummer. In May it is a carpet of bluebells, and when I reached it in the sweet of the morning Miss Deighton was on her camp-stool with her drawing-block and water-colours in her hand. From the bank which sweeps down prettily from a little copse the eye descended upon the red tiles of a farmhouse and the lush green of the spring. This was Miss Deighton's objective. I watched her paint in silence, as I smoked a cigarette. I do not believe in disturbing people when they are at work. But presently Miss Deighton shook her head impatiently. I was looking at her intently, and I saw a distinct frown contract her brows.

"I really wish you wouldn't stare so, Mr. Frobisher," she said at last with some acerbity.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I didn't know—I was interested in your picture."

She bent her face close to her drawing. "It's—I don't like people to overlook me," she remarked.

"But I was so anxious to learn how you do it," I explained. "I couldn't resist the temptation. It's so awfully clever the way you get those effects."

Miss Deighton's frown increased, and she bit her lips. "At any rate, I prefer you not to," she said, quite acidly, adding, "especially as, from where you are, you can only get a misleading view of it."

In point of fact, I could not see the picture at all; I was looking at her.

"Oh!" said I, quickly; "sorry I didn't know there was a better view. If I get farther round—" I changed my situation hastily, and from where I was now I could see Miss Deighton in profile. It was, perhaps, not quite so entrancing an aspect as her full face, because it tantalized. However, it was a good deal better than nothing. I lighted another cigarette.

"I thought I had expressed my desire not to be overlooked, Mr. Frobisher," said Miss Deighton, without turning her head.

"Oh, I thought you meant I was to get a better—"

"You did nothing of the sort," she interrupted, sharply. "Please do as I say."

"Very well," said I, heaving a sigh; and I removed myself half-a-dozen feet, from which new position I certainly couldn't see Miss Deighton's drawing. But I could see her profile still; and I sat and smoked and watched it. Presently Miss Deighton lifted a hand and waved it energetically in the air near her face.

"Really, Mr. Frobisher, if you must smoke and spoil the air of such a beautiful morning," she remarked, coldly, "I wish you'd do it at a distance."

"But the wind's from you to me," I said, humbly, "and my smoke couldn't be—"

Miss Deighton dropped her brush with decision. "How on earth do you suppose I am to get on if you will persist in talking?" she demanded, crossly.

"I'm awfully sorry," I told her, "but if you'd really rather I went, I will."

"Please do," she said, resuming her work.

I rose to go, and as I did so Aline came tumbling down the bank in her reckless way.

"There's a bull down there," she informed us, with an air of mingled satisfaction and alarm.

"Well, good morning, Miss Deighton," I said, moving off.

But Miss Deighton was on her feet.

"Bull!" she said, anxiously. "Not really, Aline?"

"Yes, he came out of the herd and looked at my red frock ever so hard," said Aline, glibly, and even triumphantly.

"Oh, but the bull wasn't there then," said Aline.

"Oh, I daren't," said Miss Deighton, with a shudder.

"Well, let's think it out carefully," said I, sitting down on the bank. "There's no need to be perturbed yet. We're safe here. The bull does not suspect our presence. Probably he thought Aline wasn't worth while. He's gone on browsing. Let's sit down and think it out." I set up Miss Deighton's camp-stool, which had fallen over, and settled her on it. Aline plumped down quite happily by me. She was having a long innings, and was quite contented.

"You don't mind my smoking?" I asked Miss Deighton.

"Oh, no, please do; I like it," she said, agitatedly.

I lit my cigarette, and resumed consideration of the problem. I know my brow was corrugated with care. Away in the middle distance browsed the herd.

"Of course, if we did get up the trees in the copse," I said, "it would be just possible that we should not be rescued for a long time. They might not hear our shouts at the farm. Can you shout loud, Miss Deighton?"

"No—I don't know—I hope I could," she stammered.



L. Biggs.

THE SCYTHE AT WORK.

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"I suppose we'll meet at lunch?" I cast back at Miss Deighton as I went.

"Oh, please, Mr. Frobisher," she called out, "don't go, Aline says there's a bull." I came to a pause. "And Aline's got a red frock on."

It was certainly true that she had. Aline, her face pleasantly expectant, regarded me with interest. She was the heroine of this adventure. Down in the meadow towards the farm pastured the cows. Was one of them a bull?

"Oh!" said I, and reflected. "It's said to enrage them, isn't it?"

"They get awful when they see red," declared Aline, importantly.

"Well, we've two chances," I pronounced. "We can get into the copse, and, swarming up trees, wait there till help comes."

"Oh, I couldn't climb a tree," said Miss Deighton, piteously.

"Well, there's the other alternative," I went on, "to take the risk, and move boldly across the field to the road. After all, we got here, and we can get back."

"I can yell like a—like anything," volunteered Aline.

"There is one way of managing that occurs to me," said I, thoughtfully. "We could send Aline out towards the herd, and then escape ourselves by a back way, when their attention was engaged by her."

Aline stared open-mouthed, but with a little grin; Miss Deighton took it very seriously.

"Oh, but we couldn't, could we? It wouldn't be fair to Aline," she said, woefully; "particularly as she's in red."

"Perhaps she could get rid of that red?" I suggested.

"Could you, Aline? What have you got—?" Miss Deighton's voice sank to a whisper, and I saw Aline shake her head and whisper back.

"No, it's no good," said Miss Deighton, mournfully. "Oh, whatever shall we do?"

"Please don't distract yourself," I urged; "or, at least, do—in the other sense. Go on with your drawing, Miss Deighton, while I think out a plan."

"Oh, I can't—I—" But she took up a brush, and her eyes went down to the grazing herd in the foreground. I went on smoking and gazed at her, this time unrestrained. Aline

plucked grasses and sucked them. She looked up at the copse now and then. I think she was anxious that I should decide in favour of climbing trees. I was still absorbed in thought, my gaze on vacancy, when Miss Deighton turned in her anxiety to see the result of my meditations. She coloured slightly as she met the ardency of my eyes, gazing through her to infinity.

"Have you—have you thought of anything?" she asked.

"Yes," I replied, "if you will trust me utterly?" I looked my question at her firmly and gravely.

"I will trust you absolutely, Mr. Frobisher," said she, impulsively.

"Very well," said I, getting to my feet; "then follow me, both of you, and have no fears."

"What—what are you going to do?" she asked, doubtfully, seeing me striding away.

"You promised to trust," I said. "Have faith. Let me have your stool and block and paint-box."

"Is—is it anything to do with them?" she enquired anxiously.

"You promised," I reminded her. "And now give me your arm; walk by my side, and, if you like, shut your eyes. Aline!"

Aline tripped along fearlessly. We plunged out towards the wilds of the meadow.

"I—I think I will shut my eyes," stammered Miss Deighton, as the herd came perceptibly nearer.

I could feel her arm tremble, and I drew it tighter; and thus we traversed the zone of danger in an awed silence.

In reaching the stile, which gave on the farm paddock, we passed within twenty yards of the cattle. The lifted heads of the cows expressed deep curiosity, and a move was made in our direction. Miss Deighton stifled a cry, from which I gathered that her fascinated eyes had not been fully shut.

"It's Aline's red dress," she murmured.

I came to a pause, and now it was she who clung tighter to me.

"I'm going to drive them away," I whispered. "Be brave, and march straight on with Aline to the stile."

I almost had to tear myself away from her, and the next moment the two were running wildly for the stile. I turned and walked into the herd, and lifting my stick brought it down on the flank of a cow. The beasts turned and sped in a panic up the meadow. I went towards the stile, where Miss Deighton and Aline awaited me breathlessly.

"Oh, how dangerous! How rash of you!" said the former.

"It might have been," said I, "if there had been a bull among them. But even then I don't think so."

"Oh, I thought that one with the funny horns was a bull; it looked so fierce at me," said Aline. Miss Deighton's face flamed.

"And you knew it all along," she said to me, furiously "You knew that—"

"I didn't know for certain," I pleaded, as she abruptly turned away. "I thought perhaps—"

But she was walking fast away towards the farm.

PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE RIVER'S MOUTH.

DESPITE the unimaginative realism with which, it is often complained, photography depicts the scenes in Nature which are submitted to its indiscriminating portrayal, yet it must be borne in mind in how many cases the camera-picture gives us the beauty of form and of light and shade belonging to objects possessing some repellent attribute, which photography entirely omits to reproduce.

Hideous wharf buildings and factory shafts, but half seen through the noisome smoke and dirt-laden atmosphere, may be so rendered as to possess all the pleasing grace of tone and mysterious elusiveness of palaces and campaniles veiled in the grey mist of an Italian morning. A stagnant pool, which may poison the air with its foulness, may reflect the surroundings in as perfect a manner as the clearest water, and its picture possess beauty equal that of the purest fountain-head. The picture appeals but to one of the five senses, and if all the offences which Nature may commit against the other four can be thus ignored, there will be found many subjects for the camera which the mere association of ideas has accustomed us to shun. The ruts in a country road, which winter's rains and the heavy waggon wheels have graven deep in the soft surface, though they make the road all but impassable to the pedestrian, and are altogether a source of discomfort, become successively ribands of silver, of gold, and of

blood-red embroiling and jewelling—a sable stole—as the sun descends and his changing light is reflected in the puddles and ruts filled with muddy water. The photographer's mind, lacking the training and discipline to which the art student's is subject, thinks of things as he knows them to be, instead of merely regarding them as they present themselves.

Picture-making has only to do with the superficial aspect of things, and a little observation will convince the open-minded that beauty often dwells in strange companionship. In this connection, let me direct the attention of the serious photographic student to a class of landscape subject which has had much to do with the promotion of the present-day school of pictorial photography. I mean the vast waste land which, in the form of almost unfathomable mud-banks, lies between low-water mark and high tide in the estuaries of our larger rivers. Say from the mouth of the Thames, about Holy Haven, round the low shores, where the Roach, the Crouch, the Blackwater, and the Colne debouch, and, further still, to where favouring circumstances have made the rivers, although no greater in force, more navigable—all about this district we find a characteristic formation consisting of the accumulation of vast mud-banks derived from the wear and tear of the higher ground.

Now there is nothing attractive in the thought of mud-



M. C. Cottam.

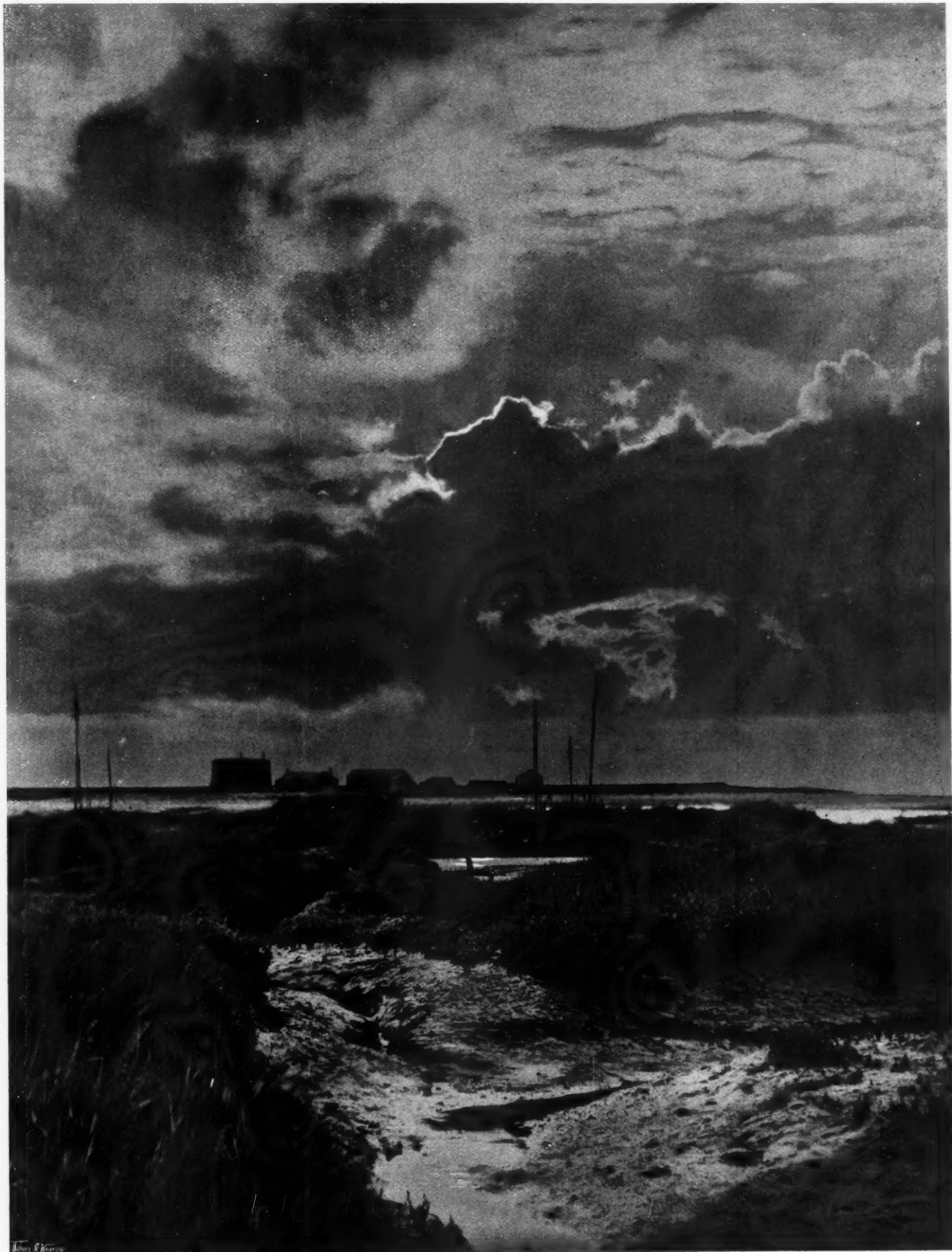
THE WET MARSH.

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banks, yet their form, their light and shade, and varied colouring have attracted artists, but the photographer utters an expression of disgust and passes on. Before me, on the brown earth, reticulated with divers cracks, and breaking into scale-like flakes of whiter and dustier hue, my purple shadow stretched—now sharply defined, now softly diffused, as the evening sun climbed

rippleless, reflected the sun's retreating image, together proclaimed him vanquished, for there was water left in the river, and the flowing sea-tide would return anon, and the clouds promised rain ere morning.

Then, turning from this scene so full of dramatic meaning, I leaned upon a decayed railing of wood and watched the last of



A. Horsley Hinton.

A NORTH SEA HAVEN.

Copyright.

slowly down from bar to bar of purple cloud, shining or hiding, as one by one the long strips of gold-fringed clouds were passed, sullenly reluctant to leave the scene where, during the long midsummer day, he had drunk up the little remaining moisture from the panting earth, and had at last burnt up the lightly-stirring breeze. But that stairway of shadowful clouds, and the broad sheet of tidal water which, in breathless silence, and

the ebb tide. Midst all the vast variety which chequers earth's surface—torrent or stately river, rugged mountain or broad valley, woodland heath or meadow—is there any place wherein Nature exerts herself so well to clothe the simplest matter with such glorious colouring as where the river, flowing through long tracts of marshy country, meets at last the sea, and at low tide leaves acres of soft ooze bare, to the unsightly nakedness of

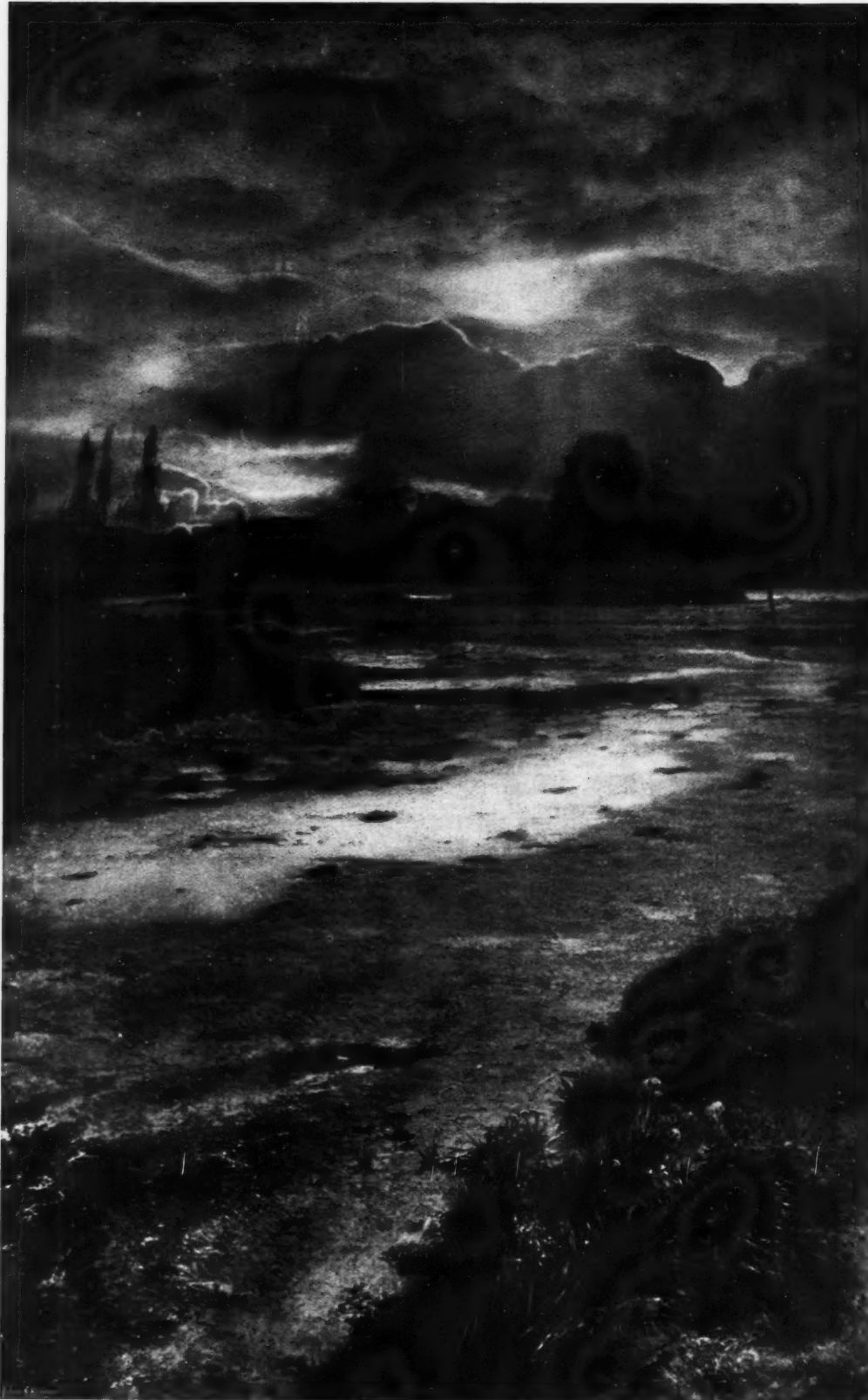
which the sunlight generously lends, until the faithless waters return, fairest and richest colours, by way of raiment? Here, indeed, is rare opportunity for painter or photographer; for the colourist—because when in June the country-side is laden with continuous green, here, amidst shelving banks and lapping waters, pearl and orpiment, purple and brown, are the prevailing hues, suffused with delicate grey, or touched with glistening lustre according to sunlight. Pre-eminently suitable for the photographer, who, let me hope, has grown weary of the pretty views of church towers, windmills, and rustic bridges, and seeks subjects wherein masses of light and shade combine and form into harmonious compositions. Perhaps it is the very emptiness of the land hereabouts, the very absence of objects of intrinsic interest, that leaves the photographer dependent solely upon happy arrangements of light and shade, or manifestations of atmospheric effects. Deprived of the innumerable details of

cottage and barn, and hayrick and tower, which the erring photographer has too long greedily portrayed with niggling definition, he has simplicity of subject, as it were, forced upon him here, and his very treatment of the subject-matter is involuntarily influenced by the sense of breadth, largeness, freedom, which even the least impressionable can hardly fail to feel.

For the younger painter, and for the photographer still bound in the fetters of mere mechanical and manipulative skill, I know of no better training-ground than the Saltings of Essex. A strange borderland between earth and sea is the Essex Saltings, peculiar to that district alone, full of character all their own, yet unfamiliar to nine-tenths of English people. Not marsh land, as most people understand it, the Essex Saltings are just Saltings, and nothing else—a physical feature found nowhere else. The basaltic columns of the North of Ireland, or the serpentine of Cornwall, are features that folks talk

about and journey to see. The white cliffs of Kent and Sussex are things the English grow proud of, but here on this low-lying flat coast of Essex and Suffolk is an enormous expanse of country as uniquely characteristic, and to the observant possessing great and peculiar beauty. The huge mud-banks which are exposed at the mouth of many a river at low tide must be familiar to many, and too often such a scene is regarded with revulsion; doubtless, as compared with clear, rippling water and green fields, this mud is not pleasant to think of. But mud as one may see it on the Essex Saltings is a different thing; it is something to sit down and wonder at, and not one, two, but many visits must be paid before we shall have learned how to look for those subtler beauties of form, the gratifying line and colour which we shall afterwards come to always associate with the mud-banks of our Essex rivers. As difficult in their way to describe as the wild grandeur of a Himalayan pass, or the far-reaching expanse of the prairie, the Saltings at high tide consist of thousands of islets or irregular masses of earth ramified by innumerable deep channels of water, mile after mile the same features, yet no two yards the same, huge hummocks of firmer ground glowing with the rich herbage of marsh plants, fissures and pitfalls in the sodden earth stretching away for miles to the little fringe of far-off trees, blue-grey, and hardly discernible in the distance. Tide by tide, land and water seem silently to wrestle for supremacy, and it is often difficult to say where the domain of each begins or ends—there is so little demarcation.

Between the cultivated meadows and the Saltings rises that wonderful construction of Dutch origin, the sea wall, a sturdy rampart full 20ft. to 30ft. high, following every indentation of the land, winding and doubling unbroken with a flattened crest, on which one may walk, and from the mouth of the Thames to the northern boundary of Essex, some hundreds of miles in length, so numerous and so deep the windings of the coast. Outside the wall, and unprotected, come the Saltings, and still beyond the smooth yielding mud of such impalpable



A. Essex by Hinton.

SUNSET AFTER A STORM.

Copyright.

material, so soft, so unctuous, that it follows the bend of every current, and yields to the slightest persuasion of the sluggish water—with no will of its own, so to speak, offering no resistance, being equally earth and water. Thus it presents to the eye wondrous forms and harmonious curves.

Most physical features seem to find fullest development in some particular corner of the earth—there the mountains, anon the lakes, the sand deserts, or the rolling moors; and here in Essex one may say mud obtains dominion, and as I stand watching the water's winding edge sweep in graceful curves round the projecting "spit" of Salting, and then on into the hazy distance of evening, this loathsome mud has become a thing of wondrous beauty, a poem. And if my reader laughs at such a notion, to him I say, go and see this thing for yourself, at such places as Bently, Rochford, Bradwell, or, better still, at Mersea, a sweet, unfrequented island washed by the North Sea, and nursed between the broad arms of the rivers Colne and Blackwater, its glistening willow trees and salt marshes reaching down to the water's edge, its red-tiled cottages and square church tower standing amidst flowery meadows, and shadowed by broad trees. Long may the present ten miles of roadway be the only means of access to the market town, and so preserve for some the repose and quietude rarely to be found at better-known spots.

If afloat on one of the broader waterways or "fleets," and keeping one's boat carefully in the middle as the tide ebbs and the channel of water grows momentarily narrower, the smooth sloping beds of mud gradually rise on either side, until the water has fallen so low that absolutely nothing but mud is in view, and one seems hemmed in by giant banks of this strange oozy pulp.

Landing there is impossible, except at two or three spots known to the inhabitants, where broken shells and some shingle have been accumulated and trodden in, and constitute what is termed a "hard," a misapplied term truly, for at lowest ebb to step on to the "hard" frequently means sinking into many inches of soft mud. Here, in cloudy weather, with the unruffled water low down and sheltered from the breeze, singularly delicate and pleasing effects may be seen, where from the grey ooze and water the long pliant hazel stems rise, which have been used to mark the oyster-bed. Tones of infinitely tender gradation, and the growing shadows mingle with their faint reflections, and daylight goes out as the grey mist comes down from the shore. And when one thinks of what these millions of tons and thousands of acres of mud mean, one realises better how in the earth's earlier history chalk hills were made from an ocean's ooze, and how all the vast sedimentary rocks that form the earth's crust were built up with the embedded record of their organic contemporaries, not by a mighty cataclysm, but by the unwearying water's slow piling up. Here, under one's very eyes, are being repeated, or rather are being continued, the cosmic changes which have given us to-day our limestones and our ornamental marbles, and one feels that the making of that great deposit, with its many embedded organisms, known as the "London Clay," is but as a chapter only just completed.

Great as mud land is with lessons of physical history, so also is it fruitful of beautiful thoughts and full of suggestions, as in the clearer air of morning or through the veiling of evening we follow its subtle curves and sinuous outlines, or revel in the pageant of resplendent colours, watching the brown sails go by,



A. Horsley Hinton.

LOW TIDE AT WOODBRIDGE.

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and catch the hoarse clanging of the bell-buoy, which, ceaselessly tossed by the waves, gives warning to the boats, and marks one of the gates of the great North Sea.

THE QUEEN BEE AND THE SWARM.

IN this season of many and curious swarms it may be interesting to mention how completely the old theory of the queen leading and deciding on the swarm has been overthrown. Scientists even among cottage bee-keepers have proved by their own observation that the old queen is compelled to abdicate when the hive is too full, and is sent forth with a liberal half of the working bees to found a new colony elsewhere. Her successor is not yet born, but is lying a white lymph in a queen cell, waited on by careful attendants and fed with the purest nourishment known as "Royal jelly." Where flowers are many and filled with honey the hive flourishes, and daily new brood, through the stages of egg, larva, and lymph, gradually emerge from the cells as perfect bees, until there are some 80,000 members of the community. Then the workers, to whom pertain the brains of the hive, decree that they must divide. One of the ordinary cells is enlarged, and its egg receives the special attention necessary to the rearing of a queen, and a few days before she emerges it is intimated to the old queen that she is deposed. How the choice is made as to who shall go with her or who stay is doubtful. All ages and different

classes of workers and drones are represented in the 5,000 or 6,000 that accompany her. She is most unwilling to go, and even when escorted to the alighting board of the hive has often to be pushed off by her followers. She usually settles on a bush near. When the owner has heard the triumphant hum of the swarms, and seen the mass of interlaced bees forming, he covers them with a white cloth over a straw skep, and waiting until twilight, puts them in a fresh bar-frame hive. Bees, unless injured, are brimful of happiness and the feeling of holiday-making when swarming, and will be easy to handle. Each individual has provided himself with a store of honey and provision for wax to last three or four days, as the queen will by no manner of means be allowed to return to the parent hive, and it is quite certain the mind of the bee does not grasp the fact that a home will be provided for them; hence they are prepared to look out for one for themselves if required, and a supply of food is a necessity and the wherewithal for beginning the walls of wax. Should, therefore, it happen that a swarm has not been hived, certain "scouts" among the worker bees are called upon to find or name a place suitable for a new abode. Apparently this is discussed, as the scouts give their various suggestions—a hole in a wall or quarry, a hollow tree, immediately under the tiles of a house, an unused chimney, an old tower, an empty coke oven, and even an empty beehive. Most of the above places have been known to the writer as tenanted by bees. They are almost impossible to remove. Their wisdom guides them to the ungetatable. When the queen is old, as often happens in a "primary swarm," the nearest domicile is oftenest chosen, for she has only once probably used her short wings before, and she is heavy and cannot travel far. The scout leads the way, and the mass follows and is soon in residence, with the next morning's light beginning wax raising and honey storing.

The young queen in the old hive is soon hatched, and reigning in the old hive, but the bees are again getting numerous, and in a week or so she also is compelled to swarm. She is often suspicious of her rival, still in the princess nymph stage in the cell, and if allowed to get to her, would tear the cell open and sting the embryo to death, or fight to the death should she by chance emerge before the swarm had left. The second swarm or "cast" is, as a rule, much smaller than the first, and the young queen is light, and likes the feeling of her new wings and powers of flight; she will thus occasionally lead the swarm for miles over hill and dale. A few days since (June, 1905), some neighbours of the writer, when walking some distance from the village, heard loud humming overhead, and a swarm passed over swiftly, making for some distant spot. Swarms are more frequent at high noon, and bees susceptible to sound, so a bell or clock will often decide the resting-place. The clock tower at Styford, on the banks of the Tyne (where bee-keepers are many),

has annually its swarms of wandering bees taking up their residence. They cannot be dislodged, but die in the winter from draughts and cold, for though naturalised in England, the bee cannot stand, without warm surroundings, the severity of our climate. Occasionally we hear of double swarms. It is even said that two queens may issue from one hive, each with its followers. Of this we have no authentic account. The double swarm is of immense size, and is really one swarm joined by another, attracted by the sound of humming and the smell of honey. A friend of the writer some few days since had such a double swarm. On hiving them, only half went into the hive; the others gradually dispersed, having apparently come from a distant hive. Had the two queens met there would have been war to the death. A queen bee has a slightly hooked sting, and never uses it except on a sister queen. No common bee would sting a queen, nor would a queen return the compliment. Only royalty is worthy of its venom, except in an extreme case. We recently saw a bee-keeper take from a wandering swarm that had settled in his garden a splendid queen. He carried it many yards in his closed hand, saying: "I must do away with her, and then the owner will get his bees back, anyhow" (for queenless bees always go to the old home). The queen made no attempt to sting him, though apparently in a great state of fury. Her hooked sting could not be withdrawn, she knew by instinct, and it would mean death for her. Left under a glass (ventilated) alone, this fine young queen soon died; having been waited on, tended, warmed, and fed by assiduous "ladies-in-waiting" all her life, what could she do alone? In sending from abroad or elsewhere for new queens for weak hives, a few workers are always sent to take care of her majesty, and to prepare food for her reception. Often it has been found that the busy little attendants are dead or dying, and the queen well and flourishing. Swarms of bees are often pursued for many miles, only to be lost to sight in the end.

The present year, as already stated, has been a year of swarms. The writer has just been told of one hive in a neighbouring garden swarming thrice during the last week of June. The good bee-keeper guards against this, as it greatly weakens the parent stock, and the chances of honey are small. In a hive inclined to swarm a second time, the space is enlarged by adding extra storeys of sections, and on a sunny day when many bees are absent, the bee-keeper opens the hive, and, taking out the innermost bars where the brood cells are, breaks out the queen cells and their occupants, so that no fresh swarm is possible. This work of destruction is sometimes performed by the bees themselves, who, in a long spell of rain or cold, when honey is scarce, will fall upon the whole of the royal family still in the cells, and destroy both them and their resting-places, and take as their spoil the "Royal jelly," gorging themselves with this dainty.

MARTIA.

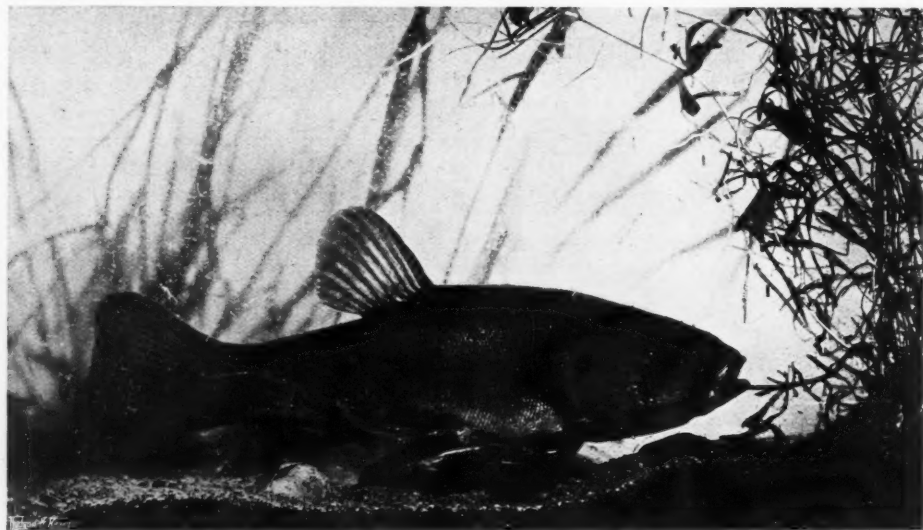
THE AQUARIUM.

FEW things have done so much to popularise the wonders of Nature as the aquarium. It is easily set up, and when properly arranged becomes at once a source of amusement and instruction. Though there are many kinds of animals which may be conveniently kept in aquaria, we propose in this chapter to confine our attentions to fishes, as they are the most popular denizens of our waters. Now all fishes, with the exception of a few exotic species, breathe the

air found ready dissolved in their native element. It is clear, then, that the best aquarium will be the one presenting the largest surface to the air as compared with its depth. This will enable the water to absorb oxygen freely from the atmosphere. Remember that the warmer the water the less oxygen will it dissolve, and consequently the fewer fish will it support.

There are many and various shapes of aquaria offered for sale, and the choice of one will greatly depend on the length of the purchaser's pocket. Do not, however, be tempted to buy one of the bell or hexagonal shape. The rectangular variety, with one side of glass and the other three of metal, is most suited to the requirements of the fish. It permits its contents to be easily studied, and at the same time provides a shaded retreat where the little animals may find shelter. Furthermore, those microscopic plants, confervæ, which grow so quickly in a strong light, and which prove such a nuisance, find little encouragement in tanks of this pattern.

When we possess the aquarium, our next step is to fit it up ready to receive its finny inmates. This is best accomplished as follows: Procure some red builder's sand, sufficient to cover the bottom of the tank to about an eighth of its depth, and well wash it in some vessel under a fast-running tap. Do this until all the loam and earthy materials are cleared out. This will leave the sand quite clean, so that when disturbed it quickly sinks again without

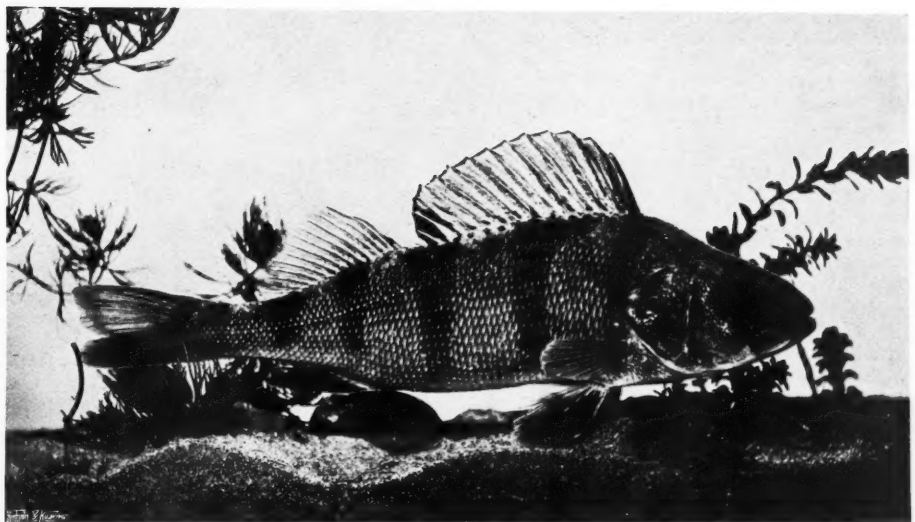


W. & S. Johnson.

TENCH.

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clouding the water. It should now be placed fairly evenly at the bottom of the tank. Some weeds will be required. They may be obtained either of a dealer or from their native ponds or streams. If purchased, *Vallisneria spiralis* should be chosen, as it shoots up quickly and is a rapid producer of oxygen. Almost anything, though, that grows in ponds will live and thrive in the aquarium; those ribbon-like weeds that are to be found in most of our English waters are specially decorative, and should be sought for on that account. Plant the weeds in the sand without delay, and keep them in position by weighing them down with clean stones. A strong stream of water or a specially unruly fish might otherwise uproot them at any moment. A few large stones should now be placed among the weeds to give the tank the appearance of the river bottom, but any larger kind of rockwork we do not advise, as there is always the chance of its falling forward and cracking the glass. The water must now be very gently poured in, disturbing as little of the sand as possible, and kept running until it has

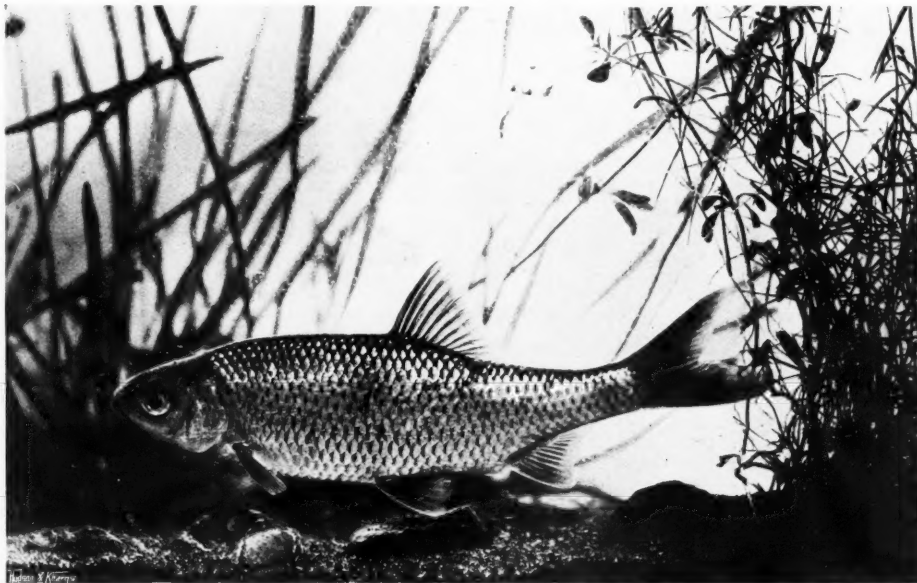


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PECK.

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live where no other fish could exist. They have been known to remain for weeks in mud-holes at the bottom of dried-up ponds. Small roach, dace, and chub, if properly managed, are very hardy, and are decidedly ornamental. Their bright silvery scales contrast well with the red goldfish and the olive green tench or carp. The most suitable of all fish is, however, the minnow (*Leuciscus foxinus*), for even when fully grown it is small and hardy. It may be added that the average tank-life of a minnow has been estimated at thirteen years. All these fish are good feeders, partaking freely, while in confinement, of crushed vermicelli, ants' eggs, flies, small worms, and the like. No more food than they will consume during the day should be given them, as any excess is likely to escape observation among the weeds and foul the water. However careful one may be, some food will remain uneaten and require removing. A good plan is to take a piece of glass tube, about half an inch in bore, just long enough to reach to the bottom of the aquarium. Firmly close one end with the finger, and place the other end just over the object to be taken out. Now remove and replace the finger in quick succession, and the material, together with a little water, will shoot up the tube, and the rest is obvious. All the fish mentioned above will live together quite peaceably if there be no very great difference in sizes. But should the aquarium-



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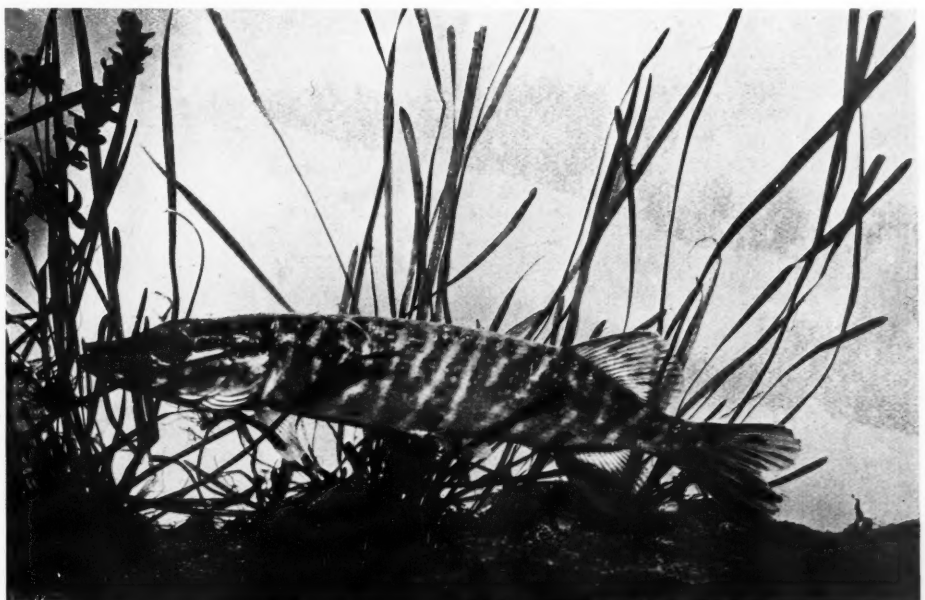
ROACH.

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become quite clear; any derangement in the sand can afterwards be put right. And here, perhaps, a word on its situation may not be amiss. The very best place for an aquarium is in a cool greenhouse facing north, or, failing that, a window with a northern aspect. Never allow the sun to shine for long on the tank, as fishes are cold-blooded animals and warm water is fatal to them.

At this stage our aquarium is ready fitted for its future inhabitants, and in this condition it should be allowed to stand for several days to give the weeds a chance of taking root. A few water-molluscs may be obtained, preferably those known as ramshorn or trumpet snails. These will perform their work by feeding on any decaying matter that has escaped the notice of the larger inmates.

Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*) are the general favourites with all who keep aquaria; they are brightly coloured, very lively, and exceedingly hardy. Like their near relative, the common carp, they are well suited for a life in the tank, as they naturally inhabit stagnant water. Tench (*Tinca vulgaris*), which were for a very long time believed to possess the power of healing their aquatic companions, will do well in almost any tank; they, being very tenacious of life,



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PIKE LYING IN WAIT.

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keeper wish to add a few pike and perch to his collection he must have a separate tank for them. These two fish are very voracious, readily devouring any of their companions if their jaws be large enough and their prey sufficiently small. They should be fed on live minnows, worms, or any fish considerably inferior to themselves in size. There are many other English fish that will thrive in our tanks, but enough has been said to enable the veriest novice in piscine matters to successfully tend any that he may come across.

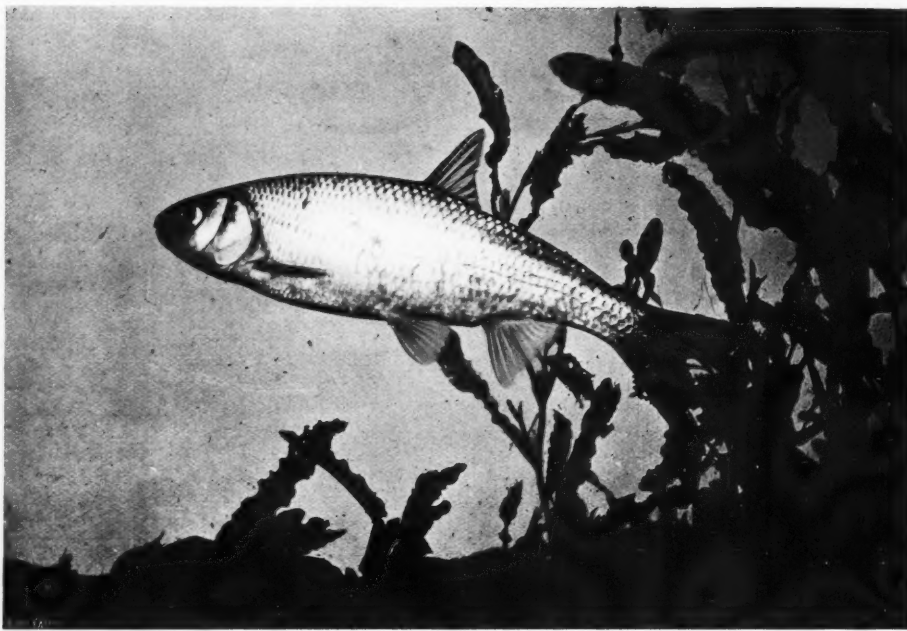
If the weeds grow well, and not too many fish are kept in the same aquarium, the water will seldom require changing. However, it is great advantage to have a constantly-playing fountain where such an arrangement is possible. All tanks should be covered to keep away dust and prevent any of the inmates leaping out; but this covering must be transparent, or the weeds will not grow. A piece of glass cut to fit the top, and raised about a quarter of an inch by means of little wooden blocks placed at the corners, answers the purpose admirably.

In conclusion, we may say that when once the aquarium is properly arranged the subsequent care it involves is extremely small. W. B. J. & S. C. J.

DISCOVERY OF A . . . ROMAN CAMP.

VERY interesting and highly-important discovery was recently made during draining operations in a field near the ancient village of Newstead, situate a short distance from the old abbey town of Melrose. The workmen engaged came across traces of a Roman camp, and these traces have been followed up. The work of excavation, which is being undertaken by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, has not yet been completed, but sufficient has been discovered to show that a Roman camp was there, and so far as known that camp appears to be the largest as yet discovered in Scotland.

Newstead village is on the right bank of the river Tweed, about a mile east of Melrose. It is thought by many antiquarians to occupy the site of the Roman town *Tremontium*, which Skene, however, places on Brunswark Hill. Roman coins, Roman altars, a stone slab with a boar in relief (the badge of the Tenth Legion), and other Roman relics have previously been unearthed. Ancient substructions, with marks which might relegate them to the Roman times, have been discovered in its neighbourhood, and a series of ancient pits, one of them containing a Roman spear and some pieces of Roman pottery, were laid open in 1846 at the formation of the North British Railway, which passes close to where the present camp has been found. The field in which the largest part of the camp has been situated is known as Red Abbeystead field, and is situate on the right-hand side of the road leading from Newstead to Leaderfoot—between the road and the main line of the railway. Some years ago this field was found to contain hewn blocks of red sandstone, and was then supposed to have been the site of an ancient



W. & S. Johnson.

DACE.

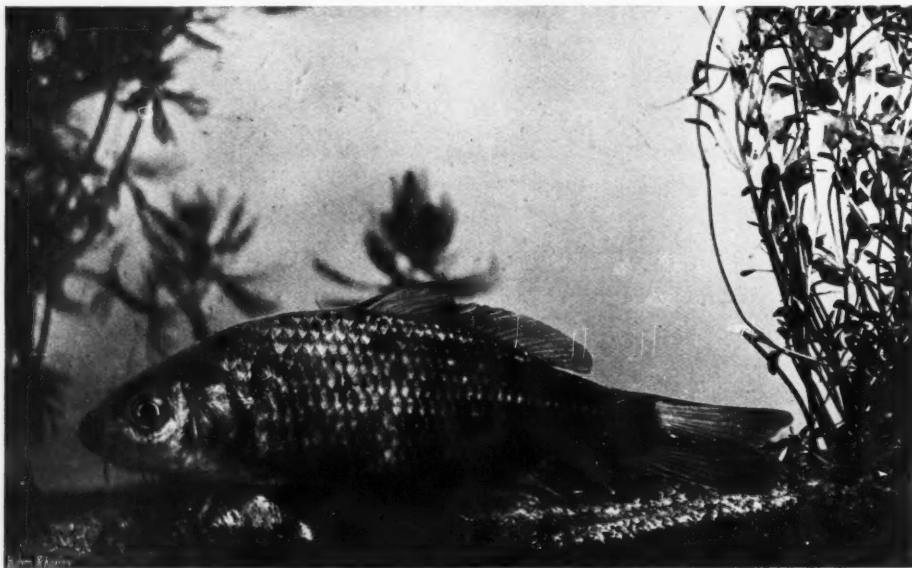
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ecclesiastical edifice. A paper on the present discoveries has not yet been written, but from information given by the gentleman who has charge of the excavations to the Berwickshire Naturalist Club, who visited the spot a few days ago, it would appear that the discovery is of a Roman station, which has been absolutely forgotten in every way. The name of it is not known, and there was no mark of it at all above ground.

About 1743 the Rev. Adam Milne wrote a description of the parish of Melrose, and writing of Old Melrose he said: "About a mile to the west, on the Tweed, stands Newstead, a place noted for an ancient Lodge of Masons, but more remarkable for another abbacy on the east side of it, called Red Abbeystead. Whether it got this name from the colour of the stones wherewith it was built, or because it was a house belonging to the Templars—who wore a red cross for their distinguishing badge—I cannot determine, but it is certain, when the ground here is ploughed or ditched, the foundations of several houses are discovered or a great deal of lead got and some curious seals."

A Roman altar was found in 1783, and another, which was dedicated by a centurion of the Twentieth Legion to the god *Silvanus*, was unearthed in 1830. The latter was found in a field to the south of the present discoveries, and both are now in the Antiquarian Museum in Edinburgh. When the railway was cut in 1846 more light was thrown on the subject. In cutting through the field to the south of the Red Abbeystead field a number of pits which were filled with black fetid matter were penetrated. In these pits were found Samian ware, horns, skulls, and bones of red deer, short-horned cattle, and other animals. Perhaps the most interesting find was the skeleton of a soldier standing erect in one of the pits with his spear beside him, part of the wooden shaft of which was still existing. Only a short description of these discoveries appears in the records of the Antiquarian Society, and it is to be regretted that the matter was not then more fully gone into. From that time until recently the place, from an antiquarian's point of view, has been deserted. In the spring of last year, Mr. Roberts of Drygrange (on which estate the fields are situated), whilst having some draining done on the Gutterflat field, came across, in the course of the operations, foundations of buildings, some Samian ware, curiously-jointed water-pipes, and other distinct traces of Roman occupancy.

The matter was then placed before the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and they agreed to take up the investigation, operations being commenced on February 14th of this year. Nothing much was found in the Gutterflat field, but the extent of what apparently was an annexe to the camp, extending to about four acres, was traced. The position of a big building with an apse was discovered, this being no doubt the baths of the station. From a plan prepared by Mr. Thomas Ross, F.S.A., it would appear that the excavators had cut a diagonal trench across the Wellmeadow field, and here remains of houses and roads, pottery and other Roman relics, were unearthed. Continuing the investigations, a very large rampart was cut into. On the outside of the rampart ran a pathway or stone causeway 15ft. wide. On the inside of that there is a large, well-built drain; then came the rampart, which is 45ft. wide, and lay partly on stone paving. On the outside is a ditch 21ft. wide and 12ft. deep, and there were also two subsidiary ditches and ramparts. The buildings in the fields formed six blocks, five of them being barrack-like buildings over 200ft. in length. They



W. & S. Johnson.

THE AQUARIUM: COMMON CARP.

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were somewhat difficult to trace, but they were typical of all Roman camps. Each was separated from the other by roads 29ft. wide, having footpaths on one side. The remaining building, which lay further east, was 190ft. long by 35ft. wide, and was built in like style. It was of better and heavier masonry, however, and had a well-defined buttress and good cross walls. Owing to farming operations the excavations in the Wellmeadow field were stopped in the middle of May, and attention was turned to the Red Abbeystead. So far the result here has been that a very large building, over 120ft. square, with well-built stokehole and flues in it, has been found. At present a long building further to the north with heavy buttresses is being unearthed. A pillar has also been revealed, but, unfortunately, this has been ploughed over and broken. Amongst the articles found is a large quantity of the ordinary rough pottery and Samian ware. The Samian ware is of very good quality, and quite a number of pieces have been got with potters' marks. Two of these—*Mammi* and *Of Rufini*—have at times been found on the Antonine wall and also in the South of England. A few fibulae and small pieces of bronze have likewise been got, and amongst them three pieces of enamel. Such finds have been very rare in Scotland, the only other Roman station where like articles have been hitherto obtained being *Camelon*. One of the articles was a brooch of pale blue enamel, with six round spots of red enamel. A fair number of coins have been unearthed, including denarii, small silver coins of Nero, Vitellius, Hadrian, Domitian, Antonius, Pius, and Crispini, and brass coins of Faustina the Elder and Trajan. As regards stonework, a few portions of moulding and one fragment with an inscription on it have been found. Several iron articles have also been unearthed. By the trench, which is at present being cut through, a new feature has been brought to light. Under the rampart has been found the ditch of an older camp, and in the bottom of this has been found a Roman stylus of bronze. So far as known the camp at present being excavated is the largest in Scotland. From the trenches already cut it is believed to be 14 acres in extent. This acreage does not include the annexes, of which there is certainly one on the west side, and most probably another on the east. So far the total area worked by the society is only $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Comparing the size of the present discovery with that of other Roman camps, it is interesting to note that *Castlecary* is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, *Birrens* about 4 acres, *Camelon* about 6 acres, whilst the largest camp on the Northumberland wall extends to about $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

The discoveries already made form a valuable addition to antiquarian researches, but, given time to pursue the matter further, the excavators, no doubt, will come across many matters which will prove highly interesting, and it is hoped that the society will be enabled to prosecute their investigations until the whole extent of the camp has been examined.

IN THE GARDEN.

NEW SWEET PEAS.

THE exhibition of the National Sweet Pea Society in the new hall of the Royal Horticultural Society was a great success, over 1,000 bunches being shown, and in some classes the competition was remarkably

keen. At such shows as these it may be taken for granted that the most striking of new varieties will be well shown. On this occasion six novelties were displayed, and these should be noted to add to existing collections. The silver medal offered for the best new Sweet Pea of the year was awarded to Mr. J. Watson, jun., The Gardens, Orford House, Ham Common, for the variety *Helen Lewis*. It is a beautiful flower, a sport from *Countess Spencer*, and the association of orange-salmon and rose is quite distinct from anything else in the Sweet Pea world. There are size, substance, and firmness without coarseness. We think, perhaps, most striking of all new Sweet Peas is Mr. Eckford's *Henry Eckford*, and the bunches of it shown attracted considerable attention. It has been described recently in these notes. Mr. W. Bolton of Carnforth, who raised the pink variety *Bolton's Pink*, is responsible for two sterling novelties—*Tom Bolton*, a flower of deep lavender shading, and *Mrs. Hardcastle-Sykes*, which has a flower of large size and soft pink colouring, this passing to a darker shade at the edge. Evelyn Byatt, the colour orange-red, a very refined and pretty flower, *Helen Pierce*, and *Queen Alexandra* complete the varieties chosen for awards. *Helen Pierce* is a Sweet Pea that is unlikely to be forgotten when once seen. It is a departure from existing varieties, the flowers being veined with palest blue on a blue-white ground. It was shown with Evelyn Byatt by Messrs. Watkins and Simpson of Tavistock Street, Covent Garden. *Queen Alexandra* is a flower of brilliant colouring—an intense red, brighter and showier than the well-known *Scarlet Gem*. This came from Mr. Eckford.

IN THE ROSE GARDEN.

There is a lull in the flowering of the Rose. It seems as if the plants were satisfied with the summer display, and regard a rest as judicious before the burst of bloom later on. A wealth of flowers at this season may be encouraged by removing dead blooms and any suggestion of a seed-pod at once. These are heavy burdens upon the resources of the plant, and exhaustion follows as a result. We strongly advise moderate pruning of climbers now, removing all worn-out growths and those that have flowered this year, as it is upon the strong, fresh young wood that flowers are produced in abundance.

Keep the soil stirred lightly in the beds, and water freely and often in very dry weather, especially Roses against the house. It frequently happens that the plants fail through the dry soil under the eaves of a house, and this remark applies to climbers in general. Several new Roses have appeared this year which we intend to add to our collection. One certainly will be the new climbing *Wichuraiana* Rose the *Lady Gay*, which promises to dim even the brilliant beauty of *Dorothy Perkins*; and another we delight in for its warm fragrance and velvety petals is *Dandy*, which was given an award of merit recently by the National Rose Society. It is a beautiful little garden Rose.

PYRUS FLORIBUNDA.

Of the many trees that flower in spring, the most beautiful, perhaps, is *Pyrus Malus floribunda*, which is shown in the accompanying illustration. There it stands out by itself, a fountain of rose and white, the drooping shoots bending with the weight of the clusters of flowers. It is also very charming in a group, as in the Royal Gardens, Kew, and no tree is happier in the town shrubbery.

RANDOM NOTES.

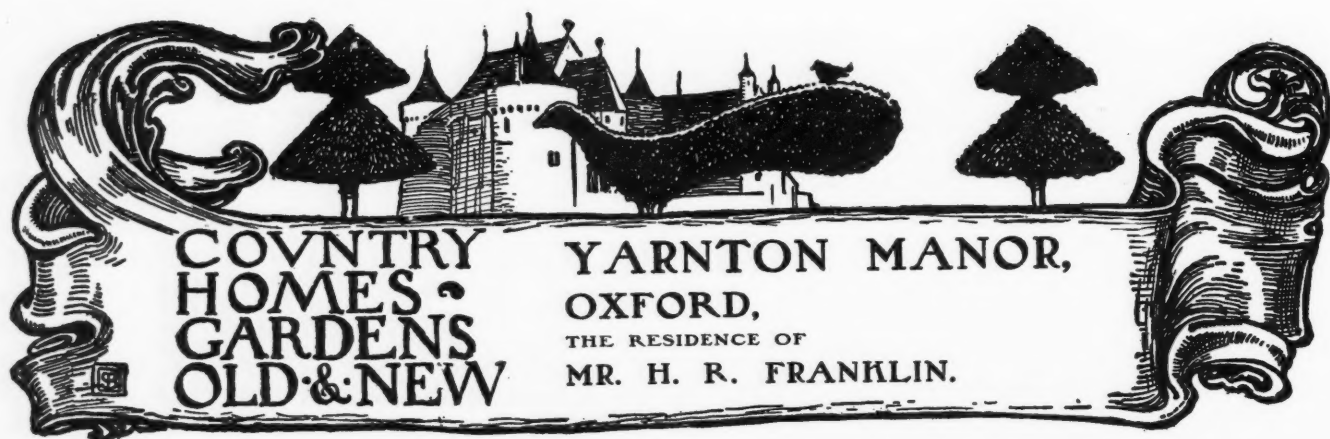
Wall Plants in Flower at this Season.—As very few plants flower during the summer, it may be well to point out those that are generally bright with colour at this time. All those named are suitable for the crevices of a wall. *Linaria* (Toad-flax) *antiarica*, *L. Cymbalaria*, *L. pallida*, *Thymes*, such as *Thymus lanceolatus*, and the pretty *T. micans*. Very suitable as wall plants are the various kinds of *Mesembryanthemums*. *M. edule* covers walls and banks rapidly in Cornwall, but unfortunately it is not hardy except in sheltered places near the sea. A hardier and more reliable plant in bloom now is *M. uncinatum*, which has tough but slender, curiously-pointed stems and bears a profusion of pretty pink flowers. The dwarf Alpine Thistle *Carlina acaulis* makes an excellent wall plant, and opens its large whitish flowers in August.



PYRUS FLORIBUNDA.

These are 4in. to 5in. across. Slender and graceful and very hardy is *Tunica saxifraga*, with its pendent flowers of a delicate bluish white and pale pink. The blue *Campanula pomila* makes a good companion to the *Tunica*. In walls, the interior of which is filled with good soil, *Campanula isophylla* and *C. isophylla alba* would succeed in a warm and sheltered place; but, perhaps, the best of all wall plants for this month are the *Sedums*. Of this useful race of very hardy plants a number are in full bloom at this time, including the yellow *S. bridgeanum*, the pale pink *S. corsicum*, which has red stems and thick fleshy leaves, the deep yellow *S. kamschaticum* and its variegated variety, the pale pink *S. populifolium*, and the somewhat tall deep yellow *S. middendorffianum*, the bright crimson *S. sibiricum*, and the curiously-formed yellow-flowering *Coxcomb*, *S. monstrosum*.

The Delphiniums.—These noble flowers of summer are passing out of bloom, but a succession is maintained when the main stem is removed before its beauty is quite over, and the laterals are allowed to develop to maintain the display. A clear sky-blue coloured variety massed against a deep purple self is a beautiful picture in a garden not far from London. It is the purity of the colouring that has made this so successful a piece of planting, and it gains in beauty from the foliage around. The plants were put in almost under an old Apple tree, and the flowering stems seem to shoot straight up into the tree and mingle their colours of all shades of bloom with the Apple's foliage. It is a picture worthy of the artist's skill. Simple grouping is always most pleasurable. We believe that these forms of *Larkspurs* are unnamed, but the colours have been selected for their peculiar beauty and freshness. Close by are several plants of *Delphinium belladonna*, which is of all the race the purest in colour and most distinct in growth. Unfortunately, it is not very strong, and slugs have an uncommon liking for the young shoots, but its slender habit and beautiful azure colouring are sufficient compensation for the watching and care that are needed to ensure success.



THE manor house of Yarnton, with the ancient church and the vicarage there, forms one of those striking architectural groups in which Oxfordshire is so rich. The architectural merit of the structure is conspicuous, and of admirable quality is the masonry in which that architecture is expressed. The seventeenth century found stoneworkers in this part of England who had not their superiors anywhere, and the church and dwelling-house at Yarnton are both much distinguished in this respect. Indeed, in the older parts of the house, there is little to remind us that the walls have weathered the

blasts of three centuries. Much is due, no doubt, to the character of the pleasantly-hued stone; but that masonry will last longest which is best hewn and best jointed together. Yarnton had the good fortune to be perfected and preserved by the immediate descendants of the original builder, and, though it went through a period of neglect, it has come in modern time into the possession of a gentleman who, with much wise thought and excellent discrimination, has made it the fair place we see in the pictures presented to-day. Architecturally it is a notable exposition of the manner of its age. The gardens which adorn it are in

harmony with its character, and the newer features of the edifice add to the beauty of its detail and the charm of its grouping.

The district is well known, for it lies within four miles of Oxford, in a part of England which has attracted many who could choose where they would reside. When Woodstock was a Royal palace, courtiers and statesmen made the neighbourhood their abode, and the Montagues and the Percys were succeeded by the great men of the Tudor and Stuart ages. Yarnton itself, anciently known as Eardington—the farmers, it is stated, still mark with an “E,” and not a “Y,” the sheep to be turned out upon the common lands—was a monastic possession. The manor had belonged to Richard, King of the Romans, and was given to the Cistercian Abbey of Rewley by his son, Edmund of Cornwall, in or about the year 1281. At the Dissolution it passed, in 1537, or 1538, to George Owen, the King’s physician, of whom it is fabled that he had performed the Cæsarean operation upon Queen Jane Seymour. In 1579, the manor was purchased by Sir William Spencer, third son of Sir John Spencer of Althorp and Wormleighton, who had attained to great wealth by sheep-farming on an enormous scale. Sir William Spencer was the builder, about the year 1612, of the Manor House. His son and successor was Sir Thomas Spencer, who matriculated at Oxford in 1599, at the age of thirteen, and represented Woodstock in Parliament from 1604 to 1611, in which latter year he was made a baronet. He acted as Sheriff of Oxfordshire in 1616, and it is notable that, with ten other baronets of his year, he was knighted by the King in 1612. Four years previously he had succeeded his father in the



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THE OPEN DOOR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

possession of the estates. He was a liberal benefactor to the venerable Early English church of Yarnton, to which he added the chapel or aisle on the south side of the chancel, where the Spencer monuments are, and he erected the tower, which, like his own house, is remarkable for the execution and finish of the masonry. He also contributed towards the building of the south porch, and there still hang in the belfry six bells which he presented to the church, five of them bearing the words "Sir Thomas Spencer, knight and baronet, lord of the manor, gave me, 1620." The baronet died in 1622, and was succeeded by his son William, then fourteen years of age, who, in 1629, like his father, was knighted. He succeeded to the estate of Claverdon in Warwickshire on the death of his great-uncle, Thomas Spencer, his wife being the daughter of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, by Alice, daughter and heiress of the same Thomas Spencer. During this baronet's lifetime, the storm of the Civil War passed over Yarnton, and at one time the house was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers. In the spring of 1644, the Parliament desired

to encompass the King at Oxford, and Waller and Essex marched upon the place; but Charles collected his forces at nightfall on June 3rd, and, with a force of 6,000 men, escaped, marching silently through Woolvercot and Yarnton, where their tramp was heard in the manor house, and thus they passed on by Handborough Bridge to Witney and Worcester.

Sir Thomas Spencer left no surviving male heir, the baronetcy passing to a cousin, while the estates came to his daughters and co-heiresses, who all married gentlemen of standing in the shires. They did not, however, desire to continue the possession, and in 1695 the reversion was sold to Sir Robert Dashwood, first baronet, of Kirtlington; but Lady Spencer lived until 1712, when she died at the age of seventy-four. In the Spencer aisle in the church is a fine monument representing her with her husband, standing, as well as their youthful son who died, and the seated figures of four daughters.

It will be noticed how fine and well-preserved is the characteristic edifice, now brought to new perfection. The



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THE HALL SCREEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright-

FIREPLACE IN GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

entrance on the east front has large mullioned windows, curvilinear gables, and a fine arched entrance between fluted pilasters. Over the doorway are the arms of the Spencers, admirably carved in high relief; and it will be observed that at the angles of the heraldic panel are circular apertures, which are said to have been designed for the discharge of musket-shot at any turbulent visitor. The chimneys are bold and very characteristic, being of stone, set diagonally. On the west front, looking over the beautiful lawns of the garden, the same character is preserved, and the many-windowed wall with its characteristic gables presents a very distinguished aspect. The grouping

throughout is very notable, and our insistence upon the fine character of the stonework will be seen to be justified by the accompanying pictures.

The price paid by Sir Robert Dashwood for the house and estate, which came into his possession in 1712, was £31,000. The mansion continued long in the ownership of his family, but ceased to be a residence, and was at one time occupied by a farmer. The present owner, Mr. Franklin, has restored it completely in a most judicious manner, preserving sedulously all that was ancient, removing some disfigurements, and making such additions as were necessary to fit it for a modern residence.



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FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

It is, indeed, a very distinguished country house, and externally and internally has many very great merits.

The plan is that generally adopted in old houses of the seventeenth century, and earlier times. How seamed with age is the entrance-door may be seen in one of the pictures. Through it the visitor passes into the entrance-vestibule, which is finely panelled in oak, with armorial escutcheons in the plaster-work above, and the low-arched doorways and the staircase are very noticeable. The vestibule is divided from the great hall by a remarkable carved oaken screen, as was customary, though we do not often see anything quite like this beautiful example of panelling. The screen is richly ornamented and admirably moulded, with finely-carved pilasters, and an excellent cornice, above which are arches separated from one another by grotesque and curious figures. The panelling and details are extremely fine throughout the room, and above the mantelpiece is a notable carving of the Royal arms of the Stuarts with the Garter. The pictures will show that the furniture and fittings are in admirable harmony with the hall itself. Almost equally noticeable is the dining-room, with beautiful, rich panelling and fine plaster-work in the walls and ceiling. The drawing-room is also finished and fitted in a similar excellent manner. Still more interesting is the gallery, with its very remarkable fireplace of ancient work. At the sides are caryatides supporting the cornice, and above is a coat-of-arms with many quarterings relieved in red and gold on the white stonework, all the gilding and colouring being original work untouched, dating from the erection of the house. There is also another fine fireplace in a bedroom, in which all the panelling is old and untouched and possesses a very rich and venerable character. It remains only to refer to the charming features of the garden, of which the character will be seen from the pictures. There is a broad lawn on the west side of the house, fringed by attractive flower-beds, and opposite is the very beautiful terrace archway, with stonesteps, over which is a sundial with the motto:

"Amidst the flowers
I count the hours."

The garden stonework, in arches, gateposts, and margins, is, like that of the house itself, excellent in style and quality; and with this remark we leave this very attractive Oxfordshire manor house.

TROUT-FISHING ON THE TAY.

THE Tay is tantalising. As regards volume and the sport which it yields, it ranks among the greatest rivers in the United Kingdom, but it is not always great to look at. It is singularly inconstant. Sometimes, especially above Ballinluig, where the Tummel runs in, it almost seems to have no greater flow than that of the Mole in the neighbourhood of Esher; at other times, in the vision of a stranger, it does more than justify its repute. There are occasions on which one cannot tell for certain where it is. Passing through Aberfeldy, a lady from London saw a house to let on the outskirts of the picturesque village. She took tenancy of it for the three months immediately ensuing, and on reaching town arranged with a few friends to be her guests in the Highlands. The garden, she told them, ran down to a large

lake, in which there was sure to be splendid fishing. When she and her guests arrived, there was no lake at all. Where it had been they beheld a golf course. The explanation is, that at the time of her first visit there had been some showers of rain on the mountains to the north-west, and the Tay was slightly flooded.

Even within narrower variations, the river is perplexing to fishermen. One week the trout give splendid sport; the next, it may be, you might as well be casting your flies on the ornamental water in St. James's Park. I am speaking, of course, broadly. It is, no doubt, the case that wherever trout are to be found trout are to be caught, however low the stream



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YARNION CHURCH: THE SPENCER CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

may be, if you seek them with great wariness and a lure exactly reproducing in feather and fur, and perchance tinsel, the insect that is the chief delicacy of the season and of the hour; but when you are in the Highlands you are apt to take it for granted that you need not be so circumspect as is necessary in Hampshire. That is where the error lies. If the Tay has just been refreshed by rain, and is running at a certain level, or not below it, you may do very well, even at midsummer, with a cast of flies chosen almost at haphazard, such as Greenwell's Glory, Woodcock and Hare's Ear, and Olive Dun; but when it has fallen and is low, which may be within a round of the clock, the Tay trout are just as exacting as trout anywhere else. They will have the

right flies, or none at all. The result is that there is but little sport on the Tay during the summer months. If the Tay were within two hours of London, these months would be the best time of the year. That is because fishermen who reside in town, and can leave it only for a day now and then, treat the craft of angling more seriously than those who are free to indulge in it whenever the mood takes them. They know that, while only a few species of aquatic insects come out early in the spring, the number increases as the year goes on, and that, if they are to show a good basket at the end of a day in July, they must be provided not only with a much greater variety of lures than were necessary in April, but also with a fairly precise knowledge of the days and the hours when the flies which these lures represent are due. Fishermen residing beside such a river as the Tay do not feel any compulsion towards this scientific vigilance. Perhaps they are aware, dimly, that the fish will rise at any time of the year if only the right flies are offered; but after May this question of what are the right flies gives so much trouble that it is left unsolved. In short, the local fishermen go out after May only in time of flood, or when the fall of the year has begun.

After a fortnight by the Tay one is obliged to think of them without scorn. Those who deem the Itchen the most difficult of trout streams cannot have tried the Tay. On that river you may have the right flies, but what are you to do with them when the water is low—where are you to cast? In the South of England streams trout seem to remain in the same hovers all through the season, but the fish in the Tay have no such habit—I mean the big ones, those of 1lb. and more. These are known to be plentiful, but when the water is low not one of them is to be seen. Normally the Tay, as it does not drain much ploughed land, is very clear, so clear that at many places, from a bridge or a high bank, you can see everything that is in it. When the water is as at the time of writing you will look for a trout over 4lb. in vain. All the better fish have disappeared. This is

strange to anyone familiar with English streams in which great trout lie contentedly where the water is only a few inches deep, apparently basking in the sunshine. The Tay trout are in the pools, of course, but how is one to reach the pools? It must not be forgotten that the channel of the Tay is broad enough to hold all the streams in Hampshire without being hard pressed. One could get at the pools to which the big trout have retired by wading, but wading in the Tay is toilsome.

One morning recently clouds gathered above Schiehallion and Ben Lawers, and soon there was rumbling thunder. It turned out, when the newspapers came next morning, that there were signs of a storm in the West Highlands more severe than any that could be recalled. Rain fell gently all day. Thinking that probably there had been heavier showers up country, I went to look at the Tay. It had risen a foot, and was still rising. Perhaps the big trout would be dropping back towards the banks? At any rate, there would be no harm in going to see. I knew of a place, about a mile above Aberfeldy, where, really, in a freshet, pounders and two-pounders, and still more majestic trout, should be plentiful and voracious. Perhaps they were; but when I reached the place, in the shade of a fragrant wood by the roadside, there was not much sign of them. The flood was still, as it were, in the first gush, and, the water being slightly discoloured, the trout were not rising freely. Nevertheless, the evening was not wasted. Out of a copse on the other side of the river came a youth, rod in hand and clad in waders. Into the river he walked; it was astonishing how far he went. When he stopped, at least 20yds. from the bank, he was hardly up to the knees. When he did stop it was to cast into slack water just below an island; within a minute he was wading back to the land. He had hooked a trout! The rod bent prettily, and I heard the agreeable sound of the reel, and in a little time the trout was dragged ashore on the pebble bank, according to the manner which, I understand, is practised by the loop-rod anglers on the Clyde. Time after time this performance

was repeated. The sportsman on the opposite side of the river was never for a minute inactive; he was always wading in, or making his cast, or wading out with a fish on. By and by the youth disappeared into the copse from which he had emerged.

A few days afterwards I went to the Post Office at Aberfeldy with a lady, carrying two parcels for her. A clerk received us with smiles, and, while briskly attending to the stamping of the parcels, asked whether we had been fishing lately. "Not since the flood a few days ago," I said. "I saw you land a good one then," said he. "Ah! then you were the fisherman on the other side?" "Yes," he answered. "I got nine, most of them over a pound; I was fishing with worm. That's not allowed on the Breadalbane side; but I have leave from Sir Neil Menzies to fish on the other side, and to try anything that may be suitable at the time."

W. EARL HODGSON.

NORMAN ARCHES.

THE Normans in England were like the Romans in the South of France. Strength, in arms, laws, and buildings, was the leading feature of both. In the latter, except that the Normans did not use Roman cement to the extent which the originators of that everlasting material did, their buildings were designed on Roman lines of solidity and permanence. The oldest Norman building in England, the White Tower, the original Tower of London, is as strong as when the roof was first put on; and the oldest Norman church, which is the chapel in that tower, might have been built yesterday. The comparison of the Norman architect with the Roman, except as regards the building of bridges and aqueducts, in which the latter were more elegant designers than any race of men, is really not quite fair to the later of those two masterful nations. In beauty of thought, conception, and design the Norman was far ahead of the older conquerors of Britain. Few people would exchange Durham Cathedral for the finest Roman building north of the Alps, and even in their smaller buildings, such as the beautiful churches of Iffley just below Oxford, or the little shrine of Barperton in Kent, or the perfect little Norman church of Adel near Leeds, the Normans combined massiveness and dignity with a delicate feeling, not



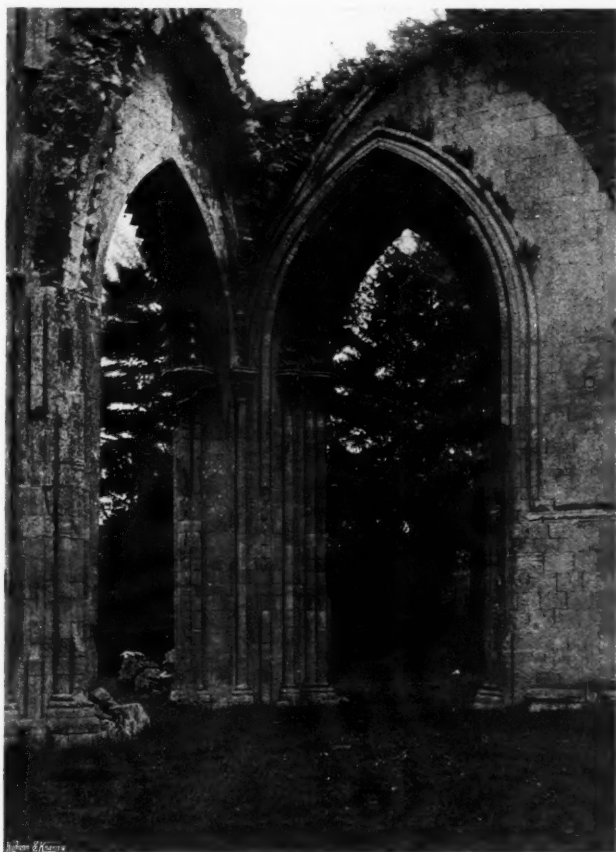
G. E. C. Morris.

IN GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

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easily matched by any late Roman work of similar size. There is a vast amount of the best Norman work still left in England, fortunately, partly because of its permanence, and partly because, in the periods of really splendid building which came later, when English taste had created another, or "pointed," style, the improvers very seldom had time to cover or remove the original Norman pillars and arches in the cathedrals. At Winchester, for instance, William of Wykeham put his pointed arches in place of the round Norman ones, and perhaps cased the original pillars. At any rate, you can see in the transept where the Plantagenet improver left off and the old Norman work remains. Very often, too, the Black Death killed off the improvers, and gave the Norman creation a fresh lease of life of many centuries.

To the ordinary mind, one of the most astonishing things about these statesmen-soldiers, the descendants of the old Vikings, is the scale on which they thought fit to build. When they conquered Normandy, there is no evidence that they found any very large or striking cathedrals to copy. Yet, in a very short time, they not only began to build new cathedrals on a vast scale, but created off-hand a new style of architecture, which was original in all essential points. Then in a very short time they conquered England, and proceeded to build on a still larger scale. Neither did they stick to the designs of Normandy. The

G. E. C. Morris. *TRANSITION STYLE.*

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English Normans created an English-Norman style. Their proportions were splendid, but the pillars were far more massive than those in Normandy, as if, to match their gain of territory, they thought it well to build on more ample lines. Neither did they lose any time about it. Durham Cathedral was designed and nearly finished before the death of Rufus. Recently, when some of the leading French architects (who have lately discovered England, and express themselves much pleased with what they see there) were taken to Durham, they could scarcely be induced to credit the early date of its Norman work until they were shown the documents proving it. The oldest Norman is easily recognised, because the joints are wide and look unfinished, and very decorative the effect is. Most of the beautiful Norman arches here shown belong to the later Norman, when the work was made lighter and more enriched with ornament. The number of fine designs which they thought out for decorating the successive mouldings of these round arches is most creditable to their power of invention—rope mouldings, many forms of zigzag, known commonly as dog's-tooth mouldings, nail heads, crosses, diaper-work cut on the moulding, lozenges, the "billet moulding," which suggests that the stone is really cut wood-work, and in a very fine design, seen at Iffley among other places, large eagles' and hawks' heads lap over a large head and seem to be holding it down with their beaks. Sometimes animals' heads appear in place of the hawks', and in others

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grotesque human faces put out their tongues in a long line around the arch.

Some of the most elaborate in England are those at Malmesbury Abbey in Wiltshire, examples of which are here shown. In one there are no less than eight mouldings, and the ornamentation is pictorial. It represents "the creation." Each animal, whether bird or beast, is represented by a separate figure, and the carving may be taken as illustrating popular natural history in the late Norman time! Another beautiful example, though in an advanced stage of decay, owing to the softness of the stone, is at Glastonbury. The pictorial method is again

G. E. C. Morris. *ROPE MOULDING.*

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WEST FRONT, CASTLE ACRE.

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DOG'S-TOOTH MOULDING.

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adopted. The mouldings, four in number, show incidents connected with the birth of Christ. The carving is believed to date from about 1186. Norfolk, with the immense Norman castle of Norwich, and the greater part of its cathedral Norman, too, contains other very fine early Norman remains. Among these are the great Norman keep at Castle Rising and the Norman priory at Castle Acre. The remains of this fine building are near Swaffham in Norfolk. In it are some typical examples of the round Norman arch. The entrance gateway contains no less than five of these arches, in which the rope moulding stands out in bold relief. Notwithstanding their seven centuries, they are in good preservation. The other arch is in the only surviving part of the south aisle. It is of great height, and of a curious shape, the lower part being perpendicular to the jambs of the sides. The ornamentation is very deeply-cut dog's-tooth moulding. Castle Rising, near King's Lynn, is an immense Norman keep, with a Norman staircase leading to the chapel on the first floor.

JETTISON.

"Out of monuments, names, words, proverbs, traditions, private records and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books . . . and the like, (we) do save and recover somewhat from the Deluge of Time."—BACON.

THE other day we had an auction in the village—a sale of the household chattels of Anthony Gill, who had held undisputed, for years and years, the title of "the oldest inhabitant." No one had ever known his age exactly, but he had been "varra near a hundred year au'd" for a long time; and everyone felt that the *Hantoucestre Chronicle* had done no more than justice when it boldly paraphrased him as a centenarian.

There was a good deal of curiosity felt as to what the turn-out would be, for latterly old Anthony had lived quite alone. He had never encouraged the neighbours' visits, and, except the rector, who went to him at the end, no one had set foot inside his door for years. And so, not unnaturally, perhaps, the old man used to be spoken of as a miser, and it was expected that at least there would be a plump bag hidden away under the flooring-tiles, or a stockingful of sovereigns up the chimney. However, nothing of the sort came to light. Old Anthony had given his will into the rector's hands. A great-nephew, a railway official from Hantoucestre (we call it Hanster, if you like to know), arrived and took possession. Lawyer Maynard of Trant managed the business, and he so far listened to the popular tattle as to order a thorough search of the premises. But, as has been said, no discoveries were made. The railway man went back home taking old Anthony's Bible, his great armchair and buck-handled walking-stick, and everything else was advertised to be sold by auction on the spot.

A sale is a great event in this village. To say nothing of all the children, somewhere about the entire adult population was there, except the men off at work, the rectory servants, and old Joe Crayke (now our oldest inhabitant), who is bedridden. The bidding, on the whole, was not spirited. I had a smart little tussle for the grandfather clock against the rector, who is

a man accustomed to gain his points, and he gained this. The wife of one of the principal farmers outbid me over a nice old copper warming-pan, which now, I hear, hangs in her drawing-room bedecked with ribbons. But when I came to reckon up my spoils I found myself the possessor of various lots, which, as we had no catalogues, may be enumerated as follows: Lot 1. A china rolling-pin and various crockery, a brass box (an old Dutch tobacco-box, if I mistake not), a spittoon. Lot 2. Sundry pictures and frames, sundry books, a mariner's compass, a hammer. Lot 3. An oak chest.

My oak chest, when I came to examine it closely at home, seemed likely to prove no great bargain. It was worm-eaten and sadly out of repair, and in a very dirty condition, having been used, apparently, for storing seed potatoes. It is a large and heavy chest, standing on four clumsy feet, and having a lower storey of two drawers. It is handsomely panelled in two squares in the front, and there is a small square of panelling between the drawers. It was set away in the wood-house, and there it lay for some weeks. At last, one day, I went down to look it over, with the notion of having it restored. I cleaned it out thoroughly, and pulled the drawers right out of their cavities, to wipe them clean too. As I passed my hand with the duster along the left side of the cavity of the right-hand drawer, my finger worked into a slot about halfway along. I dropped the cloth and felt carefully again. Within the slot was a little knob, which I pressed instinctively. I felt a spring yield, but nothing happened, and it was a long time before I discovered the working of the thing. At last, accidentally clutching the panelled boss between the two drawers, I found that it was in reality the head of a secret drawer, which could only be opened by holding down the spring. Even then it was stiff and unyielding, but at last I got it open. "Now," thought I, "for old Anthony's money!" The long, narrow drawer was entirely filled with something wrapped in a piece of faded yellow silk—no doubt, to prevent the contents rattling. I hastily unfolded the wrapping, and discovered—a dirk, its black hilt heavily ornamented with tarnished silver, a pair of silver buckles, also much tarnished, and a gold pendant, with a rim of marquise enclosing a miniature of a young man in a military dress, of the eighteenth century. The portrait and the uniform I took to be French, but the dirk was unmistakably a Highlander's skene or dagger. Upon the largest of its silver mountings was engraved a coat-of-arms, the blazoning of which, though much defaced, might yet apparently be deciphered.

This, then, was my treasure-trove! in value perhaps a few guineas at most; for the portrait, though its original had been handsomely-featured enough, was somewhat poorly done. But in interest my find was palpably rich enough. I carefully packed the relics away, and brought the whole concern into my sanctum. A few days of quiet rumination—for I had not proclaimed my find from the housetop—put me in possession of a fascinating hint as to the history of the relics. I recalled to mind an entry in the register of Eltrick Church, which the vicar there had once shown me, expressing a wonder as to "how one of Prince Charlie's men got into these parts." It was an entry of the burial of a Scotsman, a man of the Forty-five. I lost no time in paying a visit of inspection; and though the new vicar was less ready than my old friend to display the register to an idle enquirer, I was able ere long to lay my finger on the item I wanted. Under the date of January 21st, 1746, I found the following entry, "Alexander Roy Drummond was Buried." The entry is at the bottom of the page, and across the marginal corner is written in a different, a much inferior, handwriting the words "a fugitive of the Scotts army dyed at Kirstane."

There seemed, of course, to be no particular significance in this; nor did it occur to me that there could be, after all, any actual connection between the Scottish name in the register, and the dirk and portrait found in the old chest. But as I went on mechanically turning the leaves of the register, barely reading a

line, suddenly the unfamiliar name of Roy leaped at my eyes from the open page. Thus the item read: "1748, December 26th, Mrs. Katharine Fellbrigge of Norra Hall and Humphry Roy Fellbrigge a young Infant were Buried." The baptism of the same infant, nine days previously, is inserted out of its proper order and at the foot of the page, with the following ingenuous note of explanation appended: "This was misst setting down in due order and is therefore inserted here by me, Gilbert Fausset, Vicar." Searching backwards from this point I discovered, under the date of September 20, 1747, the entry of a marriage: "Humphry fellbrigge of Norra Hall, Esquire, and Katharine Gawthrop, Daughter of Sir Simon Gawthrop—Knight-Banneret of Kirstane Hall, were Married." Thus little more than a year of wedded happiness did fate allot to the Esquire of Norra and his wife. A child was born to them, to whom they gave the name of the "fugitive of the Scotts army"—and then the blow fell. To use the painfully exact phrase of Mr. Omer in "David Copperfield," "there was a little party laid along with the other party," and the home of Humphry Fellbrigge was darkened in mourning amidst the rejoicings of Christmastide. Yet Humphry himself, like Maynard Gilfil in the story, lived on to a ripe old age, as his monument in the church attests. He was born in 1706, the year of Ramillies, and he lived until 1788, the year of the establishment of the first Australian colony.

Piecing together these broken fragments of a forgotten story, one surmises that Alexander Roy Drummond reached this neighbourhood as a fugitive when the army of the Chevalier was in retreat from Derby. How he came to be so far out of the way of the main body is a mystery. Possibly he had been sent on a special mission to raise assistance of men or money during the Highlanders' march southwards. In any case, presumably, he was wounded, or was the victim of sickness or injury; and in such condition, whether accidentally or of set purpose, he sought an asylum at Kirstane. Here he was nursed by the daughter of the old Royalist and Jacobite family, and his refuge kept secret. The entry in the register describing him as a fugitive looks like the handiwork of some malcontent, interpolated with the object of bringing trouble upon the dead man's protectors. The identity of the "fugitive" of the register with that of the owner of the dirk (and presumably also the original of the portrait) one may take as fairly settled by a careful examination of the coat-of-arms (or, three bars ondé gules), an emblazonment of the family of Drummond.

But why did Humphry Fellbrigge and Katharine Gawthrop, who must have known each other

from childhood, wait all the time they did before they married? Not "for want of pice," for Humphry had succeeded to his patrimony three years before the marriage. Why did they give the name of the Jacobite outlaw to their first-born son? Whose hand wrote that dangerous note in the register? By whom, and why, were the relics hidden away so carefully? Perhaps, if you are good at guessing riddles, moreover, if you are not an indolent old bachelor, with no more of fancy or imagination in you than there were spade guineas in the secret drawer of the oak chest, you might try to unravel this thing further, and out of its faded and timeworn threads weave anew a bright-coloured romance.

H. RAPHOE.



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WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

ALL ABOUT WASPS.

WASPS are not as yet the obtrusive—not to say at times irritating—things that they will be in a few weeks, when the plums and pears are ripening; but wasps of sorts we have with us now, and there are not many things in Nature more interesting to watch. If you go out into your garden, to the kitchen garden where the earth is baked and dry between the rows of fruit bushes, and the air hangs heavy with the smell of black currants cooking in the sun, or where the hot south wall peeps red between the leaves of the fruit trees, you may become the spectator of a

sort of endless performance enacted apparently for your sole benefit, a tragedy in an indefinite number of acts, wherein wasps and daddy-long-legs are the sole performers; and each act is precisely like the one which preceded it.

THE HUNTER AT WORK.

Your eye will soon catch a smallish black and yellow belted wasp zigzagging about a currant bush or against the wall. It—or rather let us



S Keith.

A WASPS' NEST.

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say she—is as methodical in her movements as though moved by clock-work, swinging like a pendulum hung on an invisible wire over an arc of some 7in. or 8in. backwards and forwards, working her way slowly upwards till every leaf and each inch of brick has passed under scrutiny. She is quartering the ground for her game precisely as good dogs work a patch of stubble.

THE CAPTURE.

Suddenly—so suddenly that the eye cannot follow—the rhythmic motion is interrupted. The wasp is gone. The pendulum head has swung into space as if the invisible wire were cut. A second later, almost before you have been able to realise that something has happened, she reappears, however, upon a neighbouring leaf, but with her now is a crane-fly, or painted daddy-long-legs, already stung into insensibility, lying limp and helpless in the wasp's arms. The victor hangs on to the leaf by one foot—in itself no mean acrobatic performance—while she tucks the helpless daddy-long-legs comfortably away, clasped close beneath her body. The head of the daddy-long-legs is under the wasp's thorax, and, as the victim is much the longer insect of the two, one half its abdomen protrudes beyond the tail of the wasp, so that as it flies it looks absurdly like some long-legged bird trailing its feet behind it in the air.

SCIENTIFIC FOOD PRESERVATION.

But the wasp is not ready for flight yet. First it must sit down to an elaborate toilet, washing its face like a cat, combing its wings and polishing its feet and legs till all trace of the brief but unseemly scuffle has been obliterated, the whole being done with delightful unconcernedness, as if it had entirely forgotten that it was clutching all the while in its hind legs a daddy-long-legs somewhat longer than itself. But it has not forgotten; and, the toilet over, it rises without effort and floats away over the bushes and the wall in a wasp-line (which is straighter than a bee-line) for its nest, where the daddy is packed away—not, as a rule, dead, but comfortably anaesthetised, so that it is sure to keep fresh—as provender for young wasp grubs.

THE GARDENER'S WASTE OF TIME.

I have tried to explain to my friend the gardener (who has a hatred of all "insects") that, instead of laboriously killing twenty daddy-long-legs and one wasp in the course of a morning, he had much better go about other business and let the wasp kill the daddy-long-legs. But to talk in that way to him is mere waste of breath. And, after all, there are some species of wasps which, from the horticulturist's point of view, it is more justifiable to kill; but how shall we teach a gardener to distinguish between, say, *Germanica* and *Cerceris*? At best he might learn to kill them first and draw the finicking distinction afterwards.

AMERICAN WASPS.

On the subject of wasps there has just been published (by Messrs. Constable in England) a fascinating study of the American species, under the title of "Wasps Social and Solitary," by George W. Peckham and his wife. The United States (and we may or may not envy it its superiority) is very much "richer" in wasps than is Great Britain, and Mr. and Mrs. Peckham are evidently the most faithful and painstaking of observers. It is impossible not to admire the industry of a wasp which worked, while making her nest, for forty-two consecutive hours, night and day, with only one interruption of romin.; but what are we to say of the patience of the observers who are able to record the fact, and who, on another occasion, kept one insect under constant observation out in the blazing sunshine from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., on a day when the thermometer stood at 98deg. Fahr.?

A "TOOL-USING ANIMAL."

We already had evidence enough that the instinct of a wasp is of such an intelligent character as to be difficult to distinguish from reason, but one fact which Mr. and Mrs. Peckham record (and which, as it was subsequently verified by another and entirely independent observer, there is no excuse for not accepting as a fact) seems to put the wasp into a class where, with man alone, it must be given the title of a tool-using animal. All the solitary wasps, especially those which make their nests in the ground, show a greater or less degree of care in obliterating the traces of their work, as by spreading the excavated material evenly over the surface of the earth, in carrying debris away to some distance, and in covering the spot with small sticks, stones, or dead petals of flowers. But one species, an *ammophila*, goes further, and actually takes a small pebble in its mandibles, and carefully presses down the surface, hammering it until it is perfectly true and smooth. The story of many of the experiments conducted in order to test the colour-sense of the insects (which is evidently well developed), and the senses of smell, hearing, and direction (which last is much less than has often been supposed), are peculiarly interesting; but the whole book is delightful reading.

H. P. R.

E G G S.

THE coloration of birds' eggs is as diverse as it is beautiful, and the ever-varying hues and shades seem very often to aim at protection. In exactly the same way as the plumage of the birds harmonises with their different surroundings, so their eggs are coloured, in many cases, that they may be the better concealed. The history of the egg is very briefly this. The ovum, leaving the ovary, passes down the oviduct, receiving its shell, and continues on its way with a rotary motion. It may here be stated that it is not necessary for the production of an egg that a previous fertilisation by the male should have taken place, as has often been proved by females kept in solitary confinement laying eggs. The shell is meanwhile being coloured by innumerable pigment corpuscles, and is eventually extruded blunt end foremost. The "scribbles" or smears one sees on the eggs of, for example, the yellow-hammer, are caused by the pigment corpuscles acting on the shell when in motion; the spots and blotches when the shell is temporarily at rest in the oviduct. The blunt end of such eggs will usually be found to be most highly coloured, and in those cases where the colour is found mostly at the pointed end, it is presumed that by some mischance the egg was laid wrong end (*i.e.*, pointed end) foremost. The egg-shell itself, composed as it is of carbonate of lime, with a small proportion of carbonate of magnesium and phosphate of lime and magnesium, may have a glossy, smooth, or minutely-pitted surface; and, as regards colour, there is hardly a shade known which is not exhibited in a collection of the eggs of our British birds. The density of colour displayed in the markings of the egg is influenced greatly by the condition of the bird. A young or weak bird will not lay such richly-coloured eggs as an older one, though there is no doubt that when the bird grows so old as to become feeble the coloration of her eggs will be less brilliant. It will often be noticed that the first eggs laid by a bird, *i.e.*, in her first season, are spotted or streaked with blood, but this cannot be regarded as colour. Fright, excitement, or any mishap to the female will leave its traces on the eggs. The want of calcareous food explains the soft-shelled or "wind" egg, which, though not uncommonly noticed in domestic poultry and pheasants, is rarely found among birds in a wild state, though we have found such an egg of a lesser tern. As regards protective coloration, what could be better conceived than the eggs of the lapwing; buffish brown to olive in ground colour, with underlying markings of violet-grey, and blotches and streaks of blackish brown; how admirably they match their surroundings, whether they be laid on a fallow, a ploughed field, or in a tussock of rushes. Is it too much to believe that the bird knows what her eggs will be like, and that she chooses the site of her nest accordingly? for, assuredly, one will find different hues in eggs of the same species of bird, but, in most cases, do not those hues better suit their environment? A collection of eggs neatly arranged and classified, with data as to their taking, is an interesting and instructive sight in itself; but the beauty of these soon fades. Not only fades, for, in some, the actual "blowing" of the egg deprives it of the rosy tint lent by the yolk within. Look at the palest shade of pink in the newly-laid wood-pigeon's eggs, or in those of the wren or sand-martin; no lithographic print has reproduced it, no collection of egg-shells shows it; to appreciate its wonderful beauty you must see the egg as Nature designed it. And, again, there are eggs which, till they are "blown," do not reveal their curiosities. The egg of the little grebe or dabchick, for example,

chalky in exterior, and soon mud and dirt stained from the constant masses of weeds piled on to it by a cautious mother, looks in exterior uninteresting enough; "blow" it, and you will find on holding it to the light that within it is of the loveliest shade of emerald blue. But if we begin to write of the loveliest eggs, it is difficult to discriminate where all are so beautiful. What could be more perfect than the marble-like eggs of the nightjar; what more wild or characteristic than those of the red grouse? "Hedge-sparrow blue" has become a household word, from the exquisite tint of the eggs of this humble little bird. The eggs of the terns and gulls show marvellous shades of colour and varieties of markings; but perhaps those of the guillemot show the greatest variety of all. With ground colour of white, buff, brown, pale blue, blue, or sea green, they may be found scribbled, blotched, or smeared over with dark brown, black, reddish brown, and lilac-grey. You may visit some spot where a colony of guillemots is nesting, discover hundreds of their single eggs lying unprotected on ledges of the cliff, and it is improbable that you will find any two alike. Yet, if there is a colony of puffins near, you will find the eggs in their "burrows" all alike, bluish white faintly marked with brown and grey, more or less discoloured and dirty, according to the period they have been incubated. There is no definite rule as regards the coloration of eggs; the observation of Hewitson some sixty odd years ago, that many, if not most, of the eggs laid by birds which nest in holes, or even in covered nests, were uniformly white, has too many exceptions to allow of its being recognised as a rule. The dipper, the woodpecker, the sand and the house martin are birds which may be noted amongst those that either have covered nests or nest in holes, and whose eggs are white; but there are many—for example, the wood-pigeon and short-eared owl—that have open nests and yet lay just as white eggs. The tits, the wren, and the nuthatch are examples of birds whose eggs are not uniform white, yet whose nests are in holes, or in covered situations. As regards variations from the normal coloration of the eggs, it has already been stated that such variations may be caused by debility, fright, or enfeebled old age. Eggs that are abnormally pale, or which lack the markings that they should have, are presumably due to one or other of these causes. Varieties of blackbirds', song-thrushes', Arctic and lesser terns' and brown-headed gulls' eggs we have seen absolutely without any markings whatsoever; and in nearly every "clutch" of eggs there will usually be one

conspicuous for its lack or wealth of colour as compared with its fellows. As particularly illustrative of this we need only mention the eggs of the sparrow-hawk and of the tree-sparrow. Certain birds' (e.g., raven, blackcap, red-backed shrike) eggs are occasionally found of a rufous type, a peculiarity which, though very beautiful, is inexplicable. The egg that, perhaps, excites the greatest interest is that of the cuckoo. It is, of course, well known that the cuckoo which visits the British Isles in spring makes no nest of her own (though the American black and yellow-billed cuckoos make their own nests), but lays her eggs in the nest of some other bird. In many cases this parasitic egg might pass unnoticed, were it not that it is usually larger than its neighbours and thicker shelled, for in colour and markings it will exactly resemble them. This strange fact arouses much curiosity. It is impossible that the cuckoo should lay eggs coloured to her wish, and it is equally impossible that, having laid her egg, she carries it off in her bill till she finds a nest in which she can match it with the occupants. A glance at the series of cuckoos' eggs in the national collection at South Kensington will at once show the marvellous resemblance these eggs can bear to the eggs in the nests to which they have been added. Heredity may be the solution of the mystery, for it is quite conceivable that a cuckoo, commonly in the habit of putting her eggs in the nest of the same species of bird, transmits that habit to her posterity. The eggs containing hybrids afford interesting study. It has been stated that in these cases the coloration of the eggs shows signs of the colour of the egg which would have been laid in the ordinary course by the female of the fertilising male. An egg in our possession laid by a canary mated with a goldfinch showed the influence of the male in the coloration of the egg, but it is believed to be a question of vigour that settles the predominating coloration of the egg; and experiments we have tried with silver and common pheasants gave results exactly the reverse of what might have been expected. The subject we have, in conclusion, touched upon invites discussion. Speaking generally it is to be regretted that the study of birds' eggs is of little use as regards systematic ornithology; but those who dwell in the country, and who love in the springtime to wander far afield peering into such nests as they may find, admiring the varied tints and colours of the eggs therein, will not bother their heads by such thoughts, but will go on their way reiterating "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

HUGH S. GLADSTONE.

LIVES OF THE SIMPLE.

AT the present moment there is a great vogue for the cult of the simple life. The unfortunate thing about it is that the lovers, in theory (few of them are so ill-advised as to put their theories into practice) of the simple life paint it for

us in colours that, to our over-sophisticated tastes at least, appear insupportably dull. It is a scheme in monochrome. We find that those of the moderns and of the cultured who have tried it, and have made of it any kind of a success, have been those

who have had in themselves special resources by virtue of which they have made it tolerable, and in the absence of which it would not have been so. We have only quite recently been reminded in these very pages of Stevenson's indictment of Thoreau, that while he arrogated to himself airs of virtue for the many delights, perhaps falsely so-called, of latter-day civilisation that he abandoned, he was in fact no better than a shuffler off of the responsibility of citizenship, one who declined to take his part in that station of life to which Providence had called him, and so on. How that may be it is rather beside the question to discuss; certainly Thoreau's mode of life, which he has made famous, was in some respects a very admirable one. He, at least, had few vices, or practised few, even if he did not exhibit heroic virtues. But it is at all events certain that Thoreau found much compensation in the enjoyment of a disposition to meditation and literature which not every man who may adopt the simple life after his pattern is at all likely to



H. Bairstow.

THE VEGETABLE MARKET.

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possess. Edward FitzGerald, too, is another instance of one who, in another manner, followed another mode of life scarcely less simple, yet had his blessed compensations, to which we are greatly indebted—witness his immortal rendering, we might almost call it creation, of the quatrains of Omar Khayyam. We cannot accept these exceptional men as test witnesses; if we are to regard them at all in this relation, it must be rather in the way of reckoning them as exceptions that prove the rule. It was because of their exceptional qualities that they made the simple

us, is that it does not provide the means for satisfying this want, which has become a part of man's second, or acquired, nature, and at the same time deprives him of those substitutes for toil with which modern civilisation, whatever hard things be said of it, does more or less inadequately furnish him. To see the simple life in its perfection, fully sufficing for the needs of those that lead it, we cannot turn to more pleasant examples than those which are afforded by the life of certain humble folk who live by their labour on the land; and of this no finer example can be

found to-day than the life of some of the self-sufficing peasant people of France. Of these the very best type is supplied perhaps by the Normandy peasants. Their very aspect of large, well-nourished frames and strong, large-featured faces, ruddy with the glow of health, is the most convincing witness of their fitness to their appointed station. You will find in them none of that harassed look of nerve-strain that suggests the necessity of a rest cure; in spite of a certain tendency to rheumatic pains among the aged, to which the consumption of generous draughts of cyder perhaps lends its aid, they have no appearance of needing to go to Homburg or to Buxton for the medicinal waters, and there is no sign of the degeneracy born of life for several generations in the confined air of cities. And when we come to look further at the mode of existence of these folk, we are forced to the conviction that we need seek no more for the solution of the problem of the simple life. By a happy accident they appear to have hit upon the solution without anxious seeking. They have this to their advantage, in comparison with the agricultural labourer of Great Britain, that their work on the soil, or in the care of their stock, is work bestowed on that which is their own; they have the interest of personal possession. And they have less of anxiety than has the British farmer, because their outlay and their enterprise is smaller, and again because it is all under their own eye and under their own hand. There is no brighter scene nor one that gives a more vivid impression of happy industry than the early-morning market in one of the country towns of Normandy. The sellers, and also the buyers, are for the most part women, in a homely costume at once as picturesque as it is useful. There is much chatter, much exchange of courtesies, perhaps occasionally, by way of a little piquant savour, a little exchange of discourtesies. These hurt nobody. For the most part it is a very cheery, good-humoured assemblage, each member giving the other the gossip of the day in the



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A VEGETABLE SHOP.

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life so successful, and it may be almost taken as proved by their success that the ordinary man who is without their gifts is more than likely to prove a failure if he strive to live his life upon their model.

Whether or no man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, it is certainly true that man as we know him—Western man—was born to labour, ever since the sin of Adam, and with that natural disposition it is likely that the simple life, even in so attractive a setting as the Garden of Eden itself, would prove a failure. The fault of the simple life as commonly proposed for

intervals of chaffering with those who come to buy. If a shower comes down, or the day is wet, umbrellas, big as tents and of bright colour, in which blue is the dominant note, are hoisted, and to the eye of the artist the scene is then almost more attractive than under the sunlight. The actual wares brought to market vary, of course, with the seasons. At one time there will be rows on rows of cabbages; at another red-faced apples will furnish forth the stalls—the catalogue would be long to tell. Of the purchasers some are the owners of the smaller houses of the town, others are the cooks or *maitres d'hôtel* of the more

pretentious houses, and some will be the occupants of the vegetable shops where the wares that are to be bought only in early morning in the market may be purchased during the day at a slightly enhanced price, to cover the commission.

Simple as the lives of these people are, one need not suppose that they are themselves too simple to be capable of striking a very close and shrewd bargain. If you or I, being British, and ignorant, were to go into the market and buy, we should pay in all likelihood something between 25 per cent. and 50 per cent. more than a native, knowing the people's ways, would pay for the same things. It is not necessary because you live the simple life that you should not make of it a financial profit.

The growing of vegetables seems a peaceful occupation, and even their sale only moderately exciting, but there are keener delights and doubts and rewards about the rearing of things that have life, such as poultry and sheep. The length of time and the depth of cyder that a Norman will consume over arranging with a neighbour the price of a single sheep are convincing testimony to the ample leisure afforded by the simple life. These people have the keenest business instinct. Sheep, perhaps, are a kind of large deer rather beyond the aims and means of the average peasant, but there are very few that have not a number of cocks and hens; and they have, too, the knack, denied to a good many of our country-folk, of making a paying business out of them. The accompanying illustrations give typical pictures of the homes and scenes in which these people of the successful simple life pass their days. The homes are as simple as the people and their lives, but the whole thing is in harmony, the people are in their right setting. That is the solution of it all.

The prime mistake is to assume that the simple life can be lived with satisfaction in utter idleness. It is good in theory, but in practice it fails to satisfy. Balzac, than whom no one knew human nature more intimately, makes one of his people say with ecstasy, "Ah, Monsieur, la vie en plein air, les beautés du ciel et de la terre, s'accordent si bien avec la perfection et les délices de l'âme!" It is quite true; all these pleasant things are in accord for a while, but a time comes when the soul grows more active interests. Balzac, be it observed, does not make the remark out of his own mouth, as an aspiration of his own. He puts it into the mouth of one very different from himself. The speech occurs in the "Médecin de Campagne." These Norman peasants doubtless perfect their souls and bodies by the delights of the open air and the beauties of Nature, but these come to them unconsciously, just like the air that they breathe. They take no account of them. The things of which they take account, those that seem to them really to matter in their lives, are the fortunes and the prices of their vegetables and their poultry, and the lives and manners of their children, relations, and neighbours. So these things occupy their soul, and though their life is truly simple enough, that is not to say that it is empty. Its interests are numerous enough to fill it. The people whose lives really are empty are the over-sophisticated, and what their longing for the simple life really means is a longing for an occupation



H. Bairstow.

A HOME OF THE SIMPLE.

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in life. The Norman peasant has this, in spite of his simplicity, so all is well with him.

To make any reference at all to the life of these peasants, and to omit from it all mention of the effect of their religion on their lives, would be a very great and very obvious mistake. They are, of course, Roman Catholics, and whatever we, of a Protestant nation, may think of that religion, we cannot deny it its value in bringing peace—it may be, conceivably, the peace of error and illusion—to the soul of man. This peace the Norman peasant enjoys in full measure, and its expression is to be read on his placid features. There is at least one thing that the Roman Catholics manage better than we do: their churches are open at all hours and to all people. When the business of the market is done, or in the intervals of any other labour or of any occupation, the peasant man or woman will often turn for a few minutes into the cool shelter of church or cathedral, where is rest for the body and refreshment for the soul in silent prayer. Here, again, is a touch of that simplicity which is so ideally satisfying, a simple turning of the thoughts to God in intervals of the business of the workaday world in which He has placed man. It is as far removed as may be from the monkish idea of seclusion from the world and all its duties. The simple life must be life spent in the



H. Bairstow.

STRIKING A BARGAIN.

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fulfilment of its duty, or it can never for long appeal to man, constituted as he is, as a life of satisfying beauty.

Somewhere, no doubt, deep down in the hearts of these people, followers of the simple life, there are sparks of that spirit which made of a certain Norman long ago so renowned a conqueror that all down the ages of history he has been known as The Conqueror *par excellence*, with all the capital initials. Under an appearance of stolidity that is hardly Gallic they have an intrepidity which finds scope for its expression when they occupy their business in the great waters, as is the lot of many of them in that country of so large a seaboard. It is a coast full of dangers, of complicated channels, and of sunken rocks so many that the charting of them all would, practically speaking, be impossible. Yet they dare these channels and these risks, in pursuit of their fisherman's calling, on many days when the storm warnings are hoisted from Calais down all the coast to the Bidassoa and the confines of Spain. Comparisons are unpleasant things, and it would not become us, even in these most pleasant days of the *entente cordiale*, to attempt any estimate of the Norman mariner, whether of his skill or of his courage, on the standard of our own maritime people. It would be unprofitable, if it were possible; but this at least we may say, that with no crew or captain (our own nation alone excepted) of any other country would we go to sea with so good assurance as with the Normans, who, after all, it is to be supposed, have some infusion of the Viking blood in their veins. But all this is a side of their character that appears but rarely. There are other traits more obvious, and, whatever value we may



H. Bairstow

WASHING IN THE RIVER.

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attach to it, it is surely a trait that is not really at all in contradiction to those which the simple life makes more manifest. Rather it is to be thought that the mode of life which these lines have tried to indicate a little, if not absolutely conducive to this daring spirit, is at least admirably adapted for preserving it. None of its force is dissipated in the social complexities which are so wearing of the nerve power of most of those who merely yearn for, but do not follow, the life of simplicity. They find enough of adventure and of peril on

the sea to make them bold and ready of resource, and the very simplicity of their lives keeps their bodily faculties in best condition for performing their part to best effect when the emergency arrives that requires their exercise.

Doubtless these are words that apply more strictly to the coast-dwellers; but the peasants, too, have the spirit, we may suppose, only it has not the same occasions for its expression. They are of one stock with the coastwise folk, living a life even more simple, less eventful, but with character very similar "from the centre to the sea."

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

FROM many different points of view Maurice Hewlett's new book, *The Fool Errant* (Heinemann), is extremely interesting. Mr. Hewlett has gone for his inspiration to the greatest of all novels, the immortal life of Don Quixote, but it would be unfair to compare his Mr. Strelley with the Don. Roughly speaking, the theme of the



H. Bairstow.

A NORMANDY PASTORAL.

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book is this: A young enthusiast of quixotic temperament and the highest sense of honour falls in love with a married woman, some two years younger than himself, and in a moment of passion he avows his feelings for her. This is the sin for which the years dealt with in the novel are a purgatory and a repentance. Evidently a work of this kind must stand or fall as much by the soundness of its philosophy as by any other test. If it be not true to Nature, all the other gifts and cleverness in the world will not keep it alive. At the first glance it may seem that Cervantes made an excursus into the absurd that was incredible, but then by his great art he supplied motives that proved perfectly convincing to the reader. When we hear about Don Quixote's amazing definition of the literature of old chivalry, and when we also become aware that his temperament is akin to that of a lunatic, the rest of the story becomes perfectly credible and, indeed, inevitable. It seems to us the chief weakness of Mr. Hewlett's work is that it is lacking in springs of conduct which would serve for those utilised so skilfully by Cervantes. What his hero does in the beginning is not in any way to outrage Nature, but simply to outrage a convention, or, if it be thought preferable to put it in this way, a law made by human society for its orderly and decent behaviour. It had been easily possible by making the young man a religious zealot, which he very well might have been in the early days of the eighteenth century, to have inspired him with thoughts that would have made his offence pernicious to his inner self; for we can never forget that the choice blessings of humanity are promised to those who are pure in heart, and we know very well that at various times, and in various places, men have put an unnatural restraint on themselves because in doing so they considered that they were fulfilling the wish of their Creator. But Mr. Hewlett has not worked this mechanism at all; on the contrary, he makes of his hero a singularly natural and attractive young man, whose simplicity is one of his greatest charms; and this very simplicity makes us feel all along that the bar between him and his Aurelia is artificial and unreal, for it is made quite evident from the very beginning that she, on her part, is pining to fall into his arms. Indeed, the climax of the book occurs when, the period of suffering having been passed, she actually declares her love for him:

"Ah, there was a time," she said, bitterly, for she saw my dismay, "there was a time when you prayed me to love you, and I refused. If then I had agreed, would you have gone white and red by turns—would you have averted your eyes—would you have looked on the ground?" She took me in her eager arms, she clung to me, she strove, panted for a kiss. "To me, to me, Francis—you loved me first—you taught me—I am yours by right of conquest. Here I am—on your breast, the forgoing, the longing Aurelia!"

I cannot express what I felt during this scene. Painful as it was to me to know myself unaffected by it, it was exquisite grief to me to have her unqueen herself before my eyes. O Aurelia, to stoop from thy celestial commerce to barter for a kiss! I know not what I said, nor can remember exactly what it was that I did. I was, I trust, gentle with her. I disengaged myself without abruptness and led her to a seat. I said nothing—but when she was more at ease within herself, I knelt before her, kissed her hand

respectfully, and left her. It was, I am sure, a case where fewest words were best. I believe that she was weeping; I know that I was."

Between the sublime and the ridiculous we know that the boundary is very thin, and if this scene were acted on the stage it would surely be more likely to provoke laughter than tears. Perhaps it might be objected to this, that before the incident occurs Strelley has met another woman who loves him even more affectionately than did the divine Aurelia; but the explanation does not really apply, because the scene embodies his attitude

throughout the whole history, and to be quite frank on the matter, we do not think it in the slightest degree natural. When that criticism has been made, we have little but praise to bestow on this volume, which, to our thinking, is far in advance of any other work done by the author. The pictures, both of men and women, are more nearly true to life than they were in his "Fond Adventures," his "New Canterbury Tales," and some of the other works which seem to tell of a lost leader. Here the work is sound and thorough throughout, and we have Mr. Hewlett at his best. The next question to ask is what that best means? Is the author one who will ultimately take his place on the bookshelf beside Cervantes, Le Sage, and Fielding? To ask the question is a very high compliment, even though we have to reply to it with a direct and uncompromising negative. For one thing, Mr. Hewlett is too prolix to be a great writer. His style in its incessant babblement of words frequently reminds us of that of Ouida. His points of wit and irony are excellent and highly worth making, but he strains too much at his collar, and pours forth a multitude of words where a master of the craft would do all that is wanted in one decisive sentence. If anyone is desirous of seeing how a character like that of Strelley could be painted, the best thing he can do is to take down his Le Sage and read again the "History of Gil Blas," or failing that, it will be good for him to read again those passages in which Fielding painted Parson Adams. The simpleton has, as a matter of fact, been always a favourite character in fiction, and one that great writers have liked to try to paint, perhaps the most successful of those attempts being that of Oliver Goldsmith. But such a tale to be told effectively must be conveyed with a simple air. On the other hand, Mr. Hewlett is to be congratulated on the variety and picturesqueness of the people he has introduced. Soldiers, monks, adventurers, all the strange inhabitants of mediæval Italy, start up vividly around us as we read, often producing the most extraordinary effects that are none the less delightful because of their grotesqueness. His characters are

drawn in bold, strong lines, and impress themselves on the memory. Here is one painted by himself:

"If," said this remarkable man, "I lay it down as an indispensable preliminary to our acquaintance, which I hope may be long and warm, that you accept me for a gentleman, it is because, as I do not happen to be one, I have devoted all my energies to demonstrating the exact contrary. No man can help the accident of his birth. My mother was an actress of Venice: God knows who was my father, but I tell myself that he was peculiarly mine. I was educated in the slips of the theatre of San



H. Bairstow.

A STREET IN ROUEN.

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Moise; at ten I ran away from home, and from the age of twelve made my fortune my own care. It was then that I found out the advantages of being what I was not, for I observed that, while nobody scrupled to cheat a gentleman if he could safely do it, nobody (on the other hand) resented the fact that a gentleman cheated him. At the age of fifteen, when I served in Zante in the company of the noble Mocenigo, and received a decoration for gallantry and a commission of lieutenant, I killed my captain for permitting himself to doubt my gentility. I should be sorry to have to reckon how many more have gone his way, or for how many years I have been obliged to shed blood in every new State I have chosen to inhabit."

This book, in a word, is one of the most enjoyable that we have read for a long time past, and presents as near an approach to greatness as any contemporary novelist has reached.

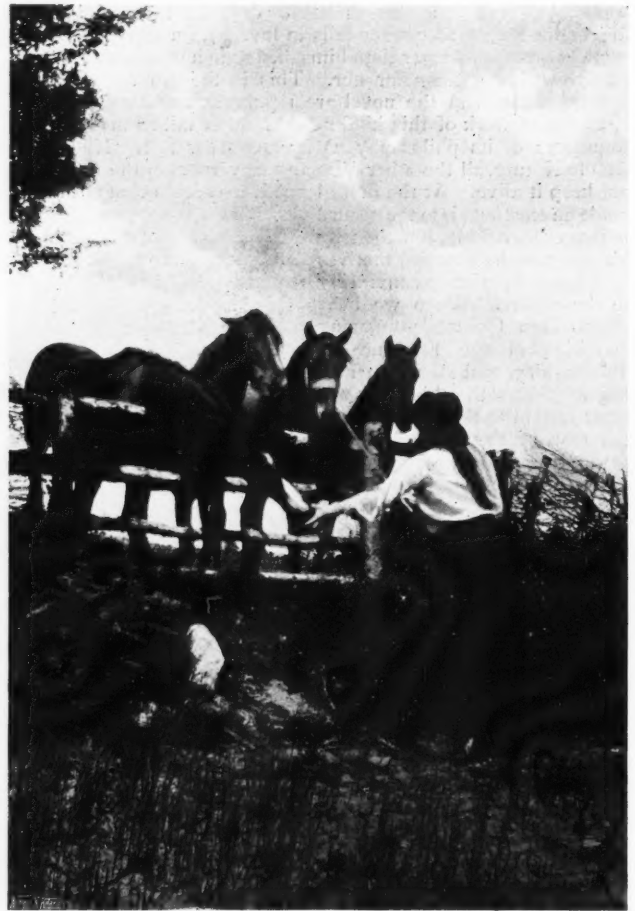
FROM THE FARMS.

THE GOOSE-GIRL.

A CORRESPONDENT writes us as follows: "I send you a photograph of some thirty or forty friends of mine in Cheshire, with whom I was spending a few days last month. I found their society more than refreshing, and would advise those who are worn out with the fatigue and boredom of the weary round of London to seek a like peaceful and secluded spot, and, in the company of my friend the goose-girl, learn from her numerous family that a bucket of meal can bring complete happiness to those who have the good sense to lead the "simple life." On my arrival I approached them with some diffidence, feeling that, possessing neither wings nor beak, I might be looked upon as an interloper, but I was at once reassured when an enthusiastic and musical crowd came swarming round me, nibbling my clothes in a most friendly and affectionate manner—I felt that I was one of them—and, like them, I quickly found that the companionship of the goose-girl and her bucket left nothing to be desired. It was with deep regret that I once more returned to the centre of civilisation with the sad thought that before I meet my friends again Michaelmas will have come, the goose-girl will be wandering alone in that peaceful meadow, and stuffing will have taken the place of meal."

THE NORTHERN ALLOTMENT SOCIETY.

An idea to be taken up is that of the society which was established at Newcastle-on-Tyne on May 21st, 1890, as a result of several public meetings that had been held. In order that no one might be left out the subscription was fixed at rs. per annum, and the money was expended on printing, postage, and incidental items. The society has managed to secure about thirteen acres of land in Newcastle, forming part of the Town Moor, and has divided it into 144 allotments. Mr. Joseph W. Wakinshaw, who describes it, however, says: "Its principle service has been to enable its members not merely to procure land in small quantities, which they could not do single-handed, but to secure it at a wholesale price. Practically speaking, this society has been doing what Mr. Rider Haggard recommended Government to do, namely, establishing small holdings. Probably enough, if the idea were taken up in various parts of the country, and kindred estates formed, small holders might be brought into existence much more effectually than they will be by any Bill brought into Parliament. Mr. Wakinshaw gives a list of



FEEDING THE HORSES.

fourteen estates that have been purchased since 1891, and shows how naturally the population has floated back to the land in consequence.

CO-OPERATIVE DAIRYING.

In the new number of the "Journal of the Board of Agriculture," is an article by Mr. Fairfax-Cholmely on the co-operative movement in English dairying. He begins with the remark that the whole trade in England is probably on the eve of a revolution, but we do not quite understand what he means by the word "eve," as co-operative dairying has been repeated over and over again during the last ten or fifteen years. The examples with which he deals most thoroughly are the Eastern Counties Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Society, and the Skelldale Dairy. The former of these was established in the year 1896, for the purpose of securing a satisfactory price for milk, as at that time the curious anomaly existed that the fashionable West End paid less for its milk than did the poor

East End, and the margin did not go into the pockets of the farmers, but into those of the retail dealers. In point of fact, this society was more in the nature of a trades union than a co-operative society. It succeeded admirably in securing the objects with which it was started. The Skelldale Association is quite different in character. It was originally intended for a butter factory, but the promoters found out what the farmers in England had already realised—that it is not profitable to make butter in England at the price which satisfies the Danes and the Irish; that is, practically, rs. per pound. Much more is obtained for the milk in its raw state, and the milk trade has the advantage of being a ready-money one, and requiring nothing in the way of manufacture; so that the Skelldale Society after a time ceased to be purely a butter factory, but went in for all kinds of dairy products. In addition to this, he mentions the Scafold Dairy, Limited, near Melton Mowbray. It was started in 1903 for the co-operative production of Stilton cheese, and has been a considerable success. There are about



Miss E. Norris.

A GOOSE-GIRL.

Copyright.

fourteen co-operative societies in England, and they tend to increase; but the movement is so very slow that we think Mr. Fairfax-Cholmely is scarcely justified in saying that the dairy-farming of England is on the eve of a revolution.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COPPER BEECH AND PLUM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A friend who is a keen planter of trees objects to planting any trees on his estate that can be considered as "sports," and under this title he includes the copper beech and the copper or purple plum tree. May I ask if he is correct in his judgment? It seems to me a pity to exclude from a great scheme of planting such beautiful trees as these.—E. H.

[*The Copper or Purple Beech.*—The early history of the copper or purple beech is obscure. Three trees sufficiently old to form the subject of traditions and legends are said to have existed in the canton of Zurich in Switzerland as long ago as 1680, while a famous specimen at Sondershausen in Germany was discovered in the eighteenth century. From this last named most of the cultivated specimens have in all probability been derived. There is little doubt that it originated as a natural seedling, and most probably others also. *Copper-leaved or Purple Plum.*—This is *Prunus cerasifera atropurpurea*, much better known as *P. pissardi*. It was first discovered in 1880 by M. Pissardi, gardener to the Shah of Persia, at Teheran, and sent by him to France, from whence it made its way into general cultivation. M. Pissardi found it at Taurus, a town some 230 miles from Teheran. When first introduced to this country it was regarded as a distinct species, under the name of *Prunus pissardi*, but when it fruited and seedlings were raised, it was found to be nothing more than a form of the cherry plum.—ED.]

NATIONAL ART-COLLECTIONS FUND.

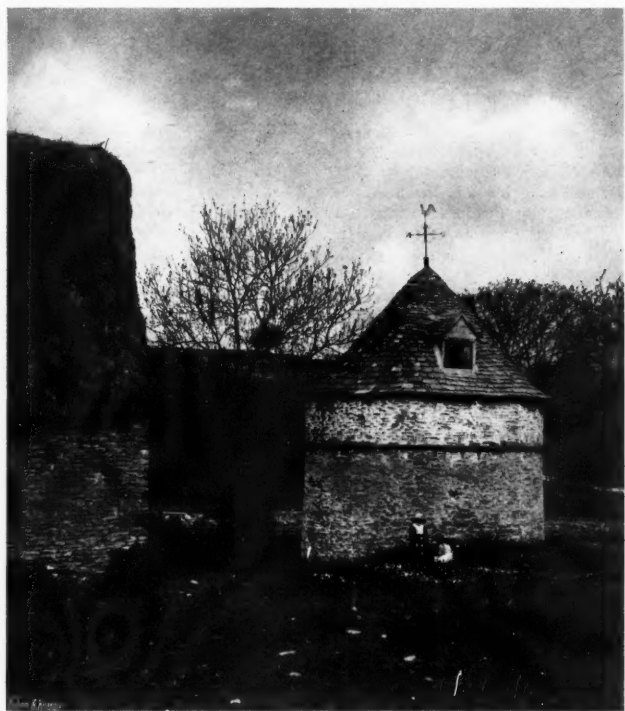
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The National Art-Collections Fund has recently acquired a "Nocturne in Blue and Silver," by Whistler, representing a night effect on the Thames, with a pier and part of a span of old Battersea Bridge in the foreground. It is one of the most beautiful and important pictures of its class, and has been offered to the trustees of the National Gallery as a gift to the nation owing to this artist being unrepresented in any of our national collections.—I. SPIELMANN and R. C. WITT, Hon. Secretaries, 47, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.

CIRCULAR COLUMBARIUM AT DAGLINGWORTH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose you a photograph of the practically unique Daglingworth columbarium, which I think you may like for COUNTRY LIFE. It is described in the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society



for 1887 as follows: "On entering the village . . . is a fine circular columbarium with a revolving ladder in good repair. In mediæval times Lords of Manors, Religious Houses . . . were entitled to have dovescots, or culverhouses, in which an immense number of pigeons were kept. These pigeonhouses were of various forms—cruciform, rectangular, circular, etc. . . . It was the latter which were fitted with the revolving ladders, *potences* as they were called, similar to that of Daglingworth now under notice. These are now seldom found complete. The *potence* consists of a stout upright post with two pivots. One of these pivots worked in a socket in the centre of the floor, and the other in the centre of the rafters of the converging roof. The upright post carried two or three arms at right angles to it, which carried at their extremities a ladder. . . . A person on the

ladder could ascend to any required tier of nests he might wish, and could make the *potence* revolve under him. There is not, so far as we are aware, another pigeonhouse remaining in this country of the same character as this under review."—T. A. GERALD STRICKLAND.

GOAT-FARMING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am very glad to observe by your valuable paper of the 8th inst. that so much interest is taken in the question of goat-farming, and that you intend to deal with the subject again. I notice that a correspondent points out that you allow nothing for the keep of the kids for five months, and I hope you will report on this, and also if there is a free market for the kids, a point I omitted to put before you. I expect your balance-sheet will have to show a considerable reduction in profit; but there is ample margin for this, and it is better not to start such an enterprise with too sanguine views.—F. W. S., Tyrol.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your very interesting articles on goat-farming may be helpful to those about to start with a large head, but as a goat-keeper in a very small way, for the purpose of adding to my income and supplying my house with milk, may I just mention a few of my difficulties? Your first article mentions twenty-five goats, two kids each. Now, two kids are quite the exception, not an item to rely upon. Second, sale of kids at 10s. apiece. I should be only too pleased to sell all of my kids at 10s. each, 4s. being considered a very good price in this neighbourhood, and I have even sold them at 1s. apiece at three months old, young billies being almost impossible to dispose of even at that. Thirdly, goats—like sheep—only come into use at certain times of the year; consequently, some months one is inundated with milk, at others the reverse. With a large herd, this, of course, can be allowed for. I might mention that the keep of mine costs me *nil* during the summer, as they feed on the roadside tethered to stumps in the ground, and I give a little bran and hay in winter. Of course, I quite understand that, if I kept a good strain of goat, I might get better prices; but then I should have to advertise, pay carriage expenses, etc., and there is but a very small demand for them at any time. After all, there is very little difference in the quality and quantity of the milk, one I have at present costing me originally 5s. when fully grown, but dry, but now giving three quarts a day regularly. Twenty shillings is the general price asked about here for a goat in full milk, so, even with these low prices, one can see that it is profitable to keep one or two goats for household purposes alone, although I cannot agree as to the fortunes to be made as described by your contributor.—E. NOBLE, Guildford.

RETRIEVING SETTERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—That the steady retrieving setter is an almost invaluable companion in a day's shooting no one, least of all the writer, will deny; but in the praise at present being lavished upon him in your "Shooting Notes," do not let us forget the equal worth of a really good retriever. In reference to the remarks of the correspondent in your issue of July 8th upon the cleverness of the setter and his quickness in finding a wounded bird owing to his habit of ranging with his head up until he actually comes upon the foot scent, may I point out that this manner of hunting, with his nose in the air, is only the result of training, and is easily taught to the young retriever. There is no doubt of it, all retrievers ought to be broken-in that way, for, in turnips especially, it saves a very great deal of time. On heather there is not the same temptation to a young dog to keep his nose down, and for that, amongst other reasons, the moor affords a much better training ground than the enclosed country for the first essays of a young dog when he really takes the field. But the first lessons in hunting and retrieving have long previously been inculcated on the lawn or indoors. It is there, in the first stages of his training, that the retriever must be taught to keep his nose up until he comes upon the scent, and if this is properly attended to he will afterwards run up to his bird before putting his nose to the ground as quickly as any setter, quartering his ground, in fact, in precisely the same manner. There are, of course, naturally wise dogs, and the opposite, amongst retrievers, as well as amongst setters, and it is only one of the former that you may hope to turn into a really valuable animal, no matter what trouble you may bestow upon him; but given a really first-rate dog of either class, and I hold that for general purposes the retriever is the more useful, and will at the end of the day have brought most game to bag. He is more enduring, and suffers less from water-work than the setter, and can be much more generally useful in a variety of ways. Of course, it is as easy to teach him to point as it is to teach the setter to retrieve—or very nearly so—and a really wise retriever, once he begins thoroughly to understand you and his business, will often teach himself to point, if he comes upon fresh game when following a wounded bird. True, he does not generally assume the stiff and correct attitude that the setter does in such circumstances; but what of that so long as he stands still and waits for you to come up to him, telling you plainly by that glance across his shoulder that there is game in front of him? As a set-off against the very interesting story in favour of the setter told by your correspondent of the 8th inst., I may say that I once saw a retriever, when he and a retrieving setter were together hunting for a wounded bird, suddenly come to a stand (his way of "pointing") on a young blackcock, which had lain close, and been overlooked by the setter before, though the latter was quick to grasp the situation, and was soon standing firm also, backing the retriever! That same retriever never had an equal, I should think, in his capacity at marking a wounded bird, which might be a towerer, or which might have flown some distance before falling. I recollect one First of September, when a friend and I were just beginning in a field of roots, where each brought down a right and left, and the remainder of the covey flew on down the hedgeside for some distance before crossing into the field. On Sailor being told to retrieve he went off at once down the side of the hedge where the covey had flown, and 200yds. away picked up a bird which had fallen dead there, unnoticed by anyone, after which he quietly retrieved the birds in front of us. The remark of your correspondent, in his story, that, before he

was taken up the retriever was following the winged bird on what was supposed to be a heel scent (though it was in reality the right line), draws attention to what is a common cause of the spoiling of many retrievers, viz., the interfering with them when they are doing their best. Of course, I do not insinuate that this was so in the case in point—we have no evidence one way or the other; but how often we do see a dog stopped when he is doing all right, owing to his master's want of confidence in him; and there is nothing that will more quickly destroy a dog's confidence in himself and in you. If the bird is lost, and you send your dog to find it, you ought to trust entirely to him, and leave him to do his best, otherwise you will never make him a really good dog. He may be wrong, but it is generally pure guesswork on your part that prompts you to think the bird has gone in a contrary direction, and so long as he is hunting you cannot usefully interfere. If he is using his intelligence, he has a much better chance than you have of knowing where the bird has gone, and if he is working out the right line and you stop him, how can you expect him to do better on a future occasion? Even if he is wrong, it is better, when possible, to allow him to find out his mistake for himself, or he will always be looking to you for assistance—often when you cannot give it—and cease to rely upon his own powers.—L. G.

ST. CUTHBERT'S MONASTERY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be very glad if you could tell me where I could obtain information about the history of St. Cuthbert's Monastery at the Farnes. The stone is now in places so weathered that it can be rubbed away with the finger, and the beautiful carved oak in the chapel seems entirely uncared for. Just outside the building there is a fine specimen of a stone coffin, hewn out

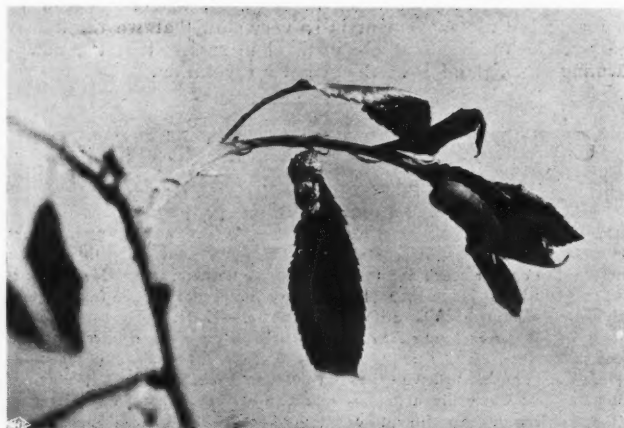
roughly in the shape of a man (about 6ft. high), and numerous remains have been found both on the island and the mainland immediately opposite. I understand that these were examined by the Durham Archaeological Society, but am not aware whether a report has been published.—A. R.

THE RAREST BRITISH BUTTERFLY.

[THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—There is little doubt that the Black Hair Streak is the rarest of all the British butterflies, that is, of the butterflies

that actually breed in England. Occasionally, it is true, other species are described as "rarest," but for the most part they are only strangers from the Continent, and not really indigenous to this country. Quite apart from its rarity, this specimen is of special interest, owing to its protective coloration. It is to be found upon the blackthorn bushes, and it may be questioned whether the perfect insect ever travels far from the bush upon which it has emerged. When on the wing it is almost invisible, owing to the fact that its upper side is dark, whilst underneath it is of a light fawn. This system of coloration is common in certain birds and animals, its effect being to make the creature practically invisible at a short distance. The pupa also is an extraordinary illustration of Nature's protection. It is to be seen in the photograph at the top of the leaf, close to the stem; irregular in shape, and of a black colour, mottled



BLACK HAIR STREAK PUPA AND LARVA.

with white, it represents an exact imitation of a bird's dropping, and thus escapes its enemies, whether birds or entomologists. It is to be doubted whether a rarer photograph containing pupa and larva on the same stem can be obtained. A friend who spent the whole day searching for the larvæ thought himself exceptionally fortunate to obtain four specimens.—S. N. SEDGWICK.

WILD DUCK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A few days ago a strange incident occurred, which may be of interest to lovers of natural history. Our house is situated 100yds. from a stream, and is divided from the garden by a public road. For some time I had heard curious sounds in the orchard, which is some way from the house, beyond the road, resembling the quacking of a duck calling her young. The mystery was soon explained. One bright afternoon, my parlour-maid, on descending the stairs, found ten young wild ducks marching through the house, possibly with some idea of reaching the river. The maid secured them all in her apron and called me. There they were, all nestled together, as quiet as possible. We were then told that the mother duck was in the orchard calling, so we carried a hencoop there and placed all the little ones in it, and awaited results, being afraid of turning the ducks out at once into the long grass, for fear of a cat. In an hour's time we went to ascertain what had happened, and found that all the little ducks had got out through the wire, except one, which was rather too large and had stuck. This little fellow, too, was liberated after some difficulty, and went off gleefully among the long grass; and there the story ended, for we never saw any of them again.—A. DE L. L.

EGG-STEALERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—You published in your issue of July 8th a photograph of the cormorants leaving their nests at the Farne Islands, and I thought that the enclosed photograph, taken almost immediately afterwards, might interest some of your readers. I had landed with the watchers, who went to gather the gulls' eggs, and, by rushing up to the nests, managed to keep the gulls away till the photograph was taken. The nests—veritable pedestals of seaweed, which the birds obtained by diving—occupied a space some 20yds. by 15yds., and such was the daring of the gulls that they would steal eggs at one end of the colony while we were at the other. In the foreground you may notice some guillemots' eggs lying on the rocks,

but they and the cormorants' eggs were all devoured by the gulls before their rightful owners could return. If the cormorants are to breed in their present quarters, it is absolutely essential that no one be allowed to land on the island, and at present the watchers have not power to prevent a landing by those who have obtained the necessary ticket from the secretary of the association. This means, of course, creating a sanctuary for the gulls, but one cannot help feeling sorry for the cormorants, which have persevered in laying eggs from April till June, and may be laying them yet, for aught I know.—A. J. R. R.



CORMORANTS' NESTS.